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international business magazine for television and video

January 1989

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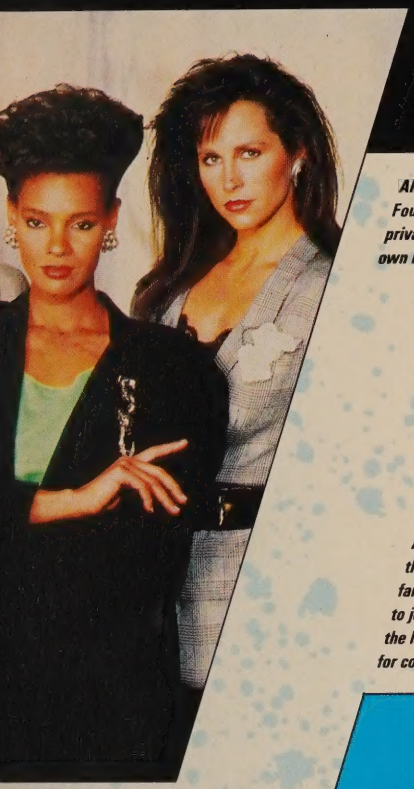

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Deputy Editor
Susan Eardley
Production Assistant
Vanessa Collu
Advertising Manager
Sarah Horner
Sales Executive
Lydia Fairfield
Circulation Manager
Kevin Crook
Publisher
Graeme Sutherland

Correspondents
Amsterdam – Bill Third
Bangkok – Jay Adair
Belgrade – Alexander Pasternijak
Beirut – Mounir Abboud
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THE Editor's LETTER

Visitors to this month's NAPTE television market in Houston may well reflect that the European market is beginning to catch up with that of America – in terms of potential outlets for material at any rate.

TV World *has been documenting the development of Europe's new satellite stations since they were no more than a twinkle in various entrepreneurs' eyes, and next month the biggest of these new ventures – Rupert Murdoch's Sky operation – will begin its full service.*

Not that many people will be watching it, for advance publicity has been woeful, apart of course from that in Murdoch's own newspapers, where stories about the operation have been elevated to an undeserved prominence. Not suprisingly, British Satellite Broadcasting (whose own operation begins in October) has taken umbrage over this misuse of influence, and has lodged official complaints.

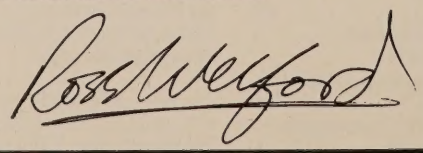
Yet all this is relatively trivial to the rest of the international TV industry, whose main interest is in the buying potential of the new stations.

Already the writing is on the wall. ITV and Sky are fighting over who owns the rights to televise the boxing match between Frank Bruno and Mike Tyson next month. (See World Round up, page 8). This can only force prices up in future.

Televised soccer was caught in a similar playoff recently when BSB offered £200 million (US$350 million) to the UK football league for ten-year rights to the games – an offer that was beaten by ITV's much-publicised £44 million (US$77 million) four-year deal for fewer league matches, still leaving cup matches for a joint BBC-BSB offer of £30 million (US$52.2 million) over five years.

Sports programmes are just one indication of the price battle that will be staged in 1989 and the coming decade as the new services thirst for their share of the viewers. Programme distributors in the US and the rest of the world can be certain that there will be no shortage of demand for their shows.

1989 also sees a new era for TV World, with the departure of Alison Homewood as Editor, and my own move into the seat she has kept warm for nearly five years. Readers will recognise one or two changes in the coming months as we adapt to the ever-changing TV market, but one thing will remain the same: our committment to providing you, the reader, with a magazine that is truly international in its outlook, an indispensable tool for the modern television executive.



ATV fined $100,000 for miscue

HONG KONG: The Year of the Dragon was supposed to be Asia Television's year to make-up lost ground and finally achieve competitive parity with its crosstown rival, TVB International.

Unfortunately, the past 12 months have been more of a nightmare for Hong Kong's perennial also-ran. The stations have been at the vortex of continuing controversy that has included a major ownership change, a massive executive-management reorganisation, and an international legal dispute over a flawed Summer Olympics contract.

With the festive year-end holidays just gone, one would think the bad luck is at an end. But, last month ATV found itself right back in the news when the Broadcasting Authority of Hong Kong slammed it with a HK$100,000 fine for showing advertisements during two of its news programmes this month.

The decision reaffirmed a broadcasting rule which had been in existence for more than 20 years which prohibits the running of commercials during any news, religious, or educational programmes.

The Authority found that ATV's Chinese channel broadcasted 2.5 minutes, and its English channel one minute, of commercials during the station's evening news programmes at 18.15 and 20.00 respectively.

Although advertising is allowed during newscasts in many other countries Hong Kong Television regulations forbid such sponsorship.

The Broadcast Authority levied a $50,000 maximum fine for each station violation and warned that any further infractions would be cause for license suspension or revocation.

ATV has decided not to appeal the judgement and explained the miscue as a "misinterpretation of the law." They contended that the commercials fell within the natural breaks of the station and not inside the news programmes per se.

People on the move

JEAN-PIERRE Anselmini has now been appointed as deputy chairman of **Maxwell Communications** by Robert Maxwell, the company chairman.

Anselmini will have particular responsibility for the management of the company worldwide with special emphasis on Europe, Africa and the Middle and Far East.

Bill Saunders has been named President of **20th Century Fox Television International.**

After its recent management buy-out, the **ITC Entertainment Group** has announced its new chairman to be Jerry Leider, formerly the company President. Chris Gorog, formerly the senior executive VP, takes over as president, John Whalley has been appointed to co-ordinate activities in Italy with special regard to the company's recently-announced co-production activity.

At the **Samuel Goldwyn Company,** Jeri Sacks has been named Vice President of Cable and Ancillary Sales for Samuel Goldwyn Television — responsible for sales to pay television, pay-per-view, basic cable, airlines, hotels and non-theatrical markets.

Robert Meyers has been appointed president of **Orion Pictures International,** replacing Ernst Goldschmidt who has left to pursue private interests.

Wendy Palmer has been made acquisitions director for **Sky Movies,** the European satellite channel starting up this year.

Getting even with Stalinism

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ITV enters a fight for its rights

LONDON: A row has broken out over who holds the British rights to screen the world heavyweight championship boxing match, to be staged next month in Las Vegas, between reigning champion Mike Tyson and Frank Bruno.

Earlier this month, Sky, Rupert Murdoch's satellite TV company, announced that it has acquired the exclusive rights to screen the big fight from the British boxer Bruno. However, Independent Television (ITV) claims that it holds the UK rights to all Mike Tyson fights, under an agreement with the US pay-TV company. Home Box Office (Tyson's multi-million dollar backers). ITV has already shown three Tyson fights and expected to have sole rights to the next event under the same agreement.

The confusion over who holds the rights, goes back to last August when the Tyson/Bruno fight was to take place at London's Wembley Stadium, but was postponed and rescheduled for Las Vegas. The new contract for the fight stipulated that Bruno had the British TV rights.

ITV's main quarrel seems to be with Frank Bruno's management. In a statement following Sky's announcement, John Bromely ITV's head of sport said, "ITV's longstanding claim to own the rights to transmit the Bruno/Tyson fight has been the subject of litigation against Bill Cayton (Bruno's manager) and Jarvis Astaire (Wembley vice president) since August 1988. The Court ordered speedy trial of this litigation. This was postponed only because of the uncertainty of the date of the fight. The trial is now fixed to be heard in the Commercial Court on January 23."

In the light of Sky's announcement, Bromley said, "it is the intention of the ITV companies as soon as possible to take proceedings against all other necessary parties to protect our rights".

In a press statement, David Davis, the lawyer representing Bruno, said that any claims that ITV makes to the TV rights are refuted by Frank Bruno. "ITV has no contract with Frank Bruno or any person acting on his behalf concerning the broadcast rights in the United Kingdom to which he is entitled," he said. "He is entitled to deal with those rights as he sees fit and intends to do so".

Bruno, currently in the US preparing for the event, intends to take action to protect his position.

Sky, set to open its satellite transmission service on February 5, will show the fight in the UK and Eire – on Sky rather than the pan-European sports channel, Eurosport. It also plans to sponsor the screening of the event in clubs, theatres and leisure centres.

The BBC will screen the fight at a later time.

Ad in Murdoch's paper News Of The World.

Global first for TV

LOS ANGELES: The world's first regularly scheduled international television programme has been announced for a spring start by Radio Vision International (RVI), an L.A.-based distribution company specializing in worldwide musical events.

Called *Go Global,* the programmes will be RVI's first series and also the first one commissioned by the BBC from a US company — although the deal with the BBC has yet to be finalised.

The hour-long, youth-oriented music and lifestyle format is targeted to the 16-25 year-old viewer. It's described as "a high-speed magazine in the style of PM" (the US afternoon show that pioneered this method of programme-making) which will include segments produced in the UK, France, Italy, Spain, Australia, Canada and various other countries.

Go Global said RVI president, Kevin Wall, has a firm 13 week production commitment. RVI expects to announce a major US buy next, possibly at NAPTE.

What Wall calls the "core" of the show will be assembled at a central production office in London. Participating broadcasters from around the world submit material to a pool and draw from it what they consider most appropriate for their audiences.

"What is being created is an enormous international resource . . . from which broadcasters can craft their own programmes," said Wall.

In the last three years, RVI has established a unique presence in foreign licensing and international distribution of long-form music-based television programming and speciality videos for both broadcast and home video — including Amnesty International's *Human Rights Now!* concert tour and the *1988 Prince's Trust Allstar Rock Concert,* for which it negotiated an exclusive sponsorship agreement between Pepsi Cola and the Prince's Trust Fund.

Telespazio satellite deal

ROME: Telespazio, the Italian parastatal company responsible for satellite transmission, has been awarded a 50 billion Lire (US$36 million) contract by Intelsat, the international organisation responsible for control of worldwide television and telephone communication via satellite.

Under the agreement, Telespazio will provide ground control and telemetry equipment and service for 11 of the 14 satellites controlled by Intelsat — with a capacity of some 26 TV frequencies and over 130,000 telephone circuits. S.D.

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Pope's productions roll as Catholic station opens

ROME: The Vatican centre for television production, instituted in 1983 by "the media Pope" John Paul II, has launched its first production in the marketplace. *St. Peter's Basilica, Old and New,* a documentary produced by Josip Duiella and Jony Foley, has been acquired by RAI television's Department of School and Educational Broadcasting.

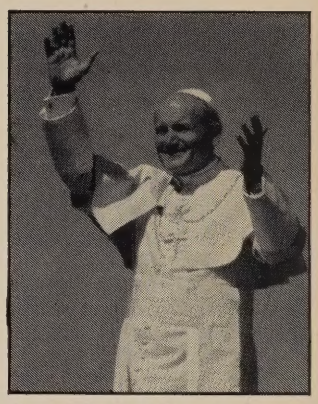
According to Sandro Baldoni, Vatican TV spokesperson, St. Peter's is just the beginning. "We have top-level production facilities and are ready to tap the world market for religious programming."

Baldoni indicated that the next project will involve a series of programmes produced expressly for English-speaking audiences, based on the Pope's regular Wednesday sermons. "Negotiations are already underway with the US networks," concluded Baldoni.

Outside of the Vatican walls, but within the shadow of the Holy See, a new local television station has gone on-air with a distinctly religious orientation. *Persona TV,* on-air since December 12, is currently visible only in Rome and the regions of Lazio, Umbria and southern Tuscany, but has plans for national expansion.

The 12-hour broadcast day includes a combination of family films and locally-produced programmes, including live coverage of the Mass said by the Pope from the Vatican every Sunday; and three broadcasts a week covering the activities of the Pope and the Catholic Church. These programmes will also be available on video cassette in English and Spanish.

At the helm of the new station is Alberto Michelini, an ex-RAI employee with 20 years of experience in broadcasting and politics. Michelini describes his philosophy as: "not Catholic television, but rather a television station run by Catholics, reaching out with a family-orientated message."



Pope John Paul II: programmes to be based on his weekly sermons.

Michelini and *Persona TV,* however, are clearly solidly behind the Pope, and although the Vatican has made it plain that there is no official link with *Persona TV,* the new broadcaster has a "friend" in high places. S.D.

Cable nets to distribute Discovery

LOS ANGELES: The Discovery Channel (TDC) and United Cable Television Corporation have formed a joint venture for the purpose of distributing Discovery programming in Europe beginning in the Spring of 1989.

The satellite-delivered service will initially launch on a prime-time basis providing programming six hours daily. Evently, the service will be expanded to provide a 12-hour daily schedule. Although the initial market focus of the service will be the British Isles and the Scandinavian countries, the joint venture will explore all European distribution opportunities with investment by local partners. Discussions are now underway with potential British and French partners.

"Documentary entertainment in science, technology, history, nature, human adventure and travel has global appeal," said John Hendricks, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of The Discovery Channel. "And as multichannel distribution technologies develop worldwide, we intend to be there with a proven format that can satisfy viewer demand for television that enlightens as well as entertains."

United will carry TDC on all its cable operations in the UK and Scandinavia.

Details about satellite transmission and distribution will be announced as the venture approaches its launch in 1989.

United's European programming operations, headed by Adam Singer, will act as the managing partner in the venture with offices based in London.

United is the eighth largest multiple systems operator (MSO) in the US with more than 12 million subscribers, United Cable is soon to merge with United Artists Communications Inc., after which the combined new company, to be called United Artist Entertainment, will be the third largest US cable operator with approximately 2.5 million subscribers. Four out of every ten US households now receive The Discovery Cannel which launched.

NBC buys into NZ's private TV3

AUCKLAND: US broadcaster NBC and Metro Media Investments, a private New Zealand media company, are planning to acquire an approximate 40 per cent interest in TV3, New Zealand's first private commercial TV network.

This move completes the corporate financing for TV3, and should enable it to proceed with its plan to broadcast throughout New Zealand in 1989.

Under existing NZ regulations, NBC's equity interest will be limited to five per cent, but changes planned for April 1989 should allow it to expand its interest to as much as 15 per cent. The remaining 25 per cent share would accrue to Metro Media.

The shareholding allocated to the two new investors will increase TV3's original capital base of US$17 million by a further US$30 million. Together with loan monies on offer, TV3 will go into 1989 with almost US$80 million in established capital. Public listing is planned for the company at an appropriate time after broadcasting commences and it is anticipated that Metro Media Investments Ltd will become the vehicle for such an offering.

Metro Media Ltd, headed by Trevor Egerton, owns the Auckland radio station 91FM along with other interests and is the leading investor in Metro Media Investment Ltd. Other shareholders include South Pacific Holdings, and institutional investors.

For NBC, this association with TV3 is an important part of its overall international strategy. The company recently announced its acquisition of a 37.75 per cent equity interest in the international news agency Visnews, and has also entered an agreement with Qintex Australia, Christopher Skase's Australian Television Network (ATN).

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New deals ... new deals ...

RIAS TV, Berlin, has purchased all five episodes of *The Last Horizon,* **TV Ontario's** photographed series on Australia's wilderness, co-produced with **NHK Japan.**

The series has also been bought by **Radio Television Malaysia, Singapore Broadcasting** and **ORF,** Austria.

Coral Pictures Corporation has secured an order from **Canal Sur Television** in Andalusia, Spain, to broadcast more than 200 hours of television programming on Free TV (beginning January 1, 1989). Canal Sur Television has the sole and exclusive rights to air the television novel *Topacio,* the story of a blind girl. When she recovers her sight, a new life begins with old intrigues. The telenovela has been aired on Spanish-language network television in the USA and in South America.

Other programmes in the agreement are *Cuentros de Terror,* an anthology of suspense and mystery, and *Los Diamantes de la Muerte* about hate and love in an exotic jungle. In addition to several documentaries and musical specials.

A scene from Los Diamantes de la Muerte.

Thames's 7,000-hour international catalogue includes programmes such as *Benny Hill, Minder*and American programmes such as *Three's Company* and *Too Close For Comfort.*

Granda International is to distribute **LBS International** programmes in Europe, Granada has been granted all-media rights to LBS programming including *The Care Bears Family* and *Bonanza: The Next Generation.* Granada will sell in the UK, Scandinavia, Benelux, Portugal and Eire.

Astral Bellevue Pathé Inc. of Montreal and la **Societé Francaise De Production et Création Audio-Visuelles** (SFP) have signed a distribution agreement, making Astral the exclusive Canadian representative of the entire SFP television catalogue. SFP has also agreed to distribute a selection of Astral products abroad.

NATPE seminar

HOUSTON: At the upcoming NATPE '89 conference, Telefilm Canada will present second annual seminar entitled *Co-productions — Canada Brings You The World.* The seminar will take place on Thursday, January 26, 1989 in Room 306 at the George R. Brown Convention Center from 10.00-11.30 am.

Six of Canada's foremost producers will discuss their years of experience in successfully negotiating co-productions and co-ventures.

The seminar will show how these producers, with their international partners, have met the escalating challenges of production financing to create programming for audiences worldwide.

In production

A regular feature of *TV World.* Send details of programmes in, or approaching, production to TV World, 100 Avenue Road, London NW3.

Turner Network Television will join **Harmony Gold** as equal partners in a co-production deal with **Video Films** of the Soviet Union for *Alexander The Great,* an eight-hour mini-series tracing the life of the famous military leader. The original film will air on TNT in 1991.

"The story of Alexander the Great is one of major historical significance and is the type of programme to which TNT is committed," said Gerry Hogan, President of Turner Broadcasting System, Inc.'s Entertainment Networks.

Frank Agrama, President and CEO of Harmony Gold, said he was 'elated' about the project. "We have deeply admired Mr Turner's efforts with the Goodwill Games and look forward to increasing US and Soviet media relations through the story of one of the world's greatest leaders, Alexander the Great."

Producers Group International has announced that production of the sitcom *Mosquito Lake* will begin in Toronto next month.

Only eight weeks after the pilot taping, PGI is proceeding on a production order from Ivan Fecan, Director of Programming for **CBC Television,** of six more episodes for airing, beginning in March of 1989.

Mosquito Lake, created by Paul K. Willis, stars Mike MacDonald as the head of a family that escapes big city turmoil, but does not necessarily find peace and quiet in the country. MacDonald, a native of Ottawa, was the recent co-host of the 1988 Gemini Awards.

He is a successful comedian who has made regular appearances on broadcast and pay-TV, and made more appearances than any other guest on David Brenner's Show.

The Ginger Tree, a major four-part drama for the **BBC,** starts shooting in the UK, Japan and Hong Kong next spring. The scripts, by Christopher Hampton, are based on the novel *The Ginger Tree* by Oswald Wynd and follows Mary, a young Scots girl as she travels to Manchuria in 1903 to join her diplomat fiancé. The drama traces her story set against the background of the growing military and political tensions of Japanese life in the first half of this century.

The Ginger Tree will be produced by Tim Ironside-Wood, and Alan Shallcross is Executive Producer. It will be directed by Ross Devenish, whose credits include the BBC serial *Bleak House.*

The Ginger Tree is a co-production with **NHK** in Japan, **Hallett Street Productions Inc** and **Masterpiece Theatre.**

An in-depth documentary analysing the current state and the future of the Olympic Games, one year before the 1988 Games in Seoul, has been made by **Flashback Television** for Channel 4 in the UK.

The sixty minute film, *Selling The Games,* shows how sponsorship is becoming increasingly important to the Olympic movement and features interviews with representatives of the major sports equipment companies as well as athletes.

Harmony Gold has entered initial production phases on *Dakar, Dakar,* a 4-hour mini-series based around the annual 8,000 mile road race from Paris to Dakar. Alex Tasca, VP production, spent time in December scouting for locations in Morocco and Tunis; in addition, production crews will film the actual race in January in order to obtain footage for the mini-series. The mini-series — the third in Harmony Gold's Premiere Network line-up — will air in the fall of 1989.

Thames Television is beginning production this month of *Ending Up,* a film for TV by Kingsley Amis.

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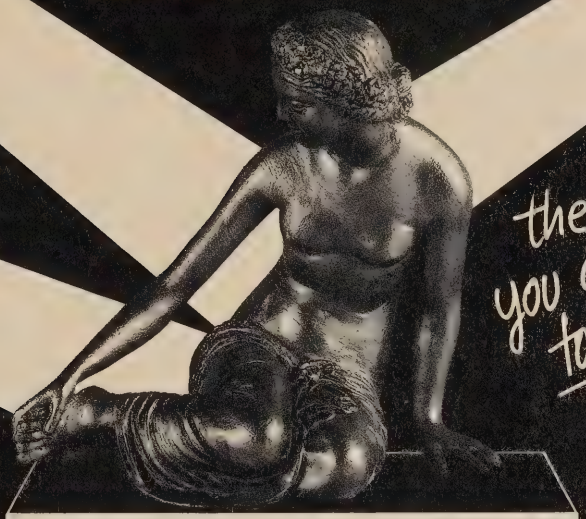

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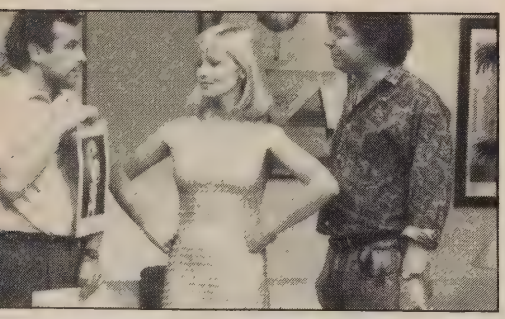
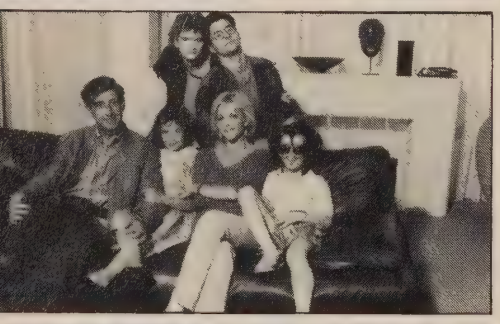
BAZZOLI





From top to bottom: 'Loft Story'; 'L'Appart'; 'L'homme à tout faire'; 'La Baby-sitter'; 'Tel Père, Tel Fils'.

The art of comedy

Three years ago there was only one domestically-produced situation comedy airing in France. Now there are ten. Thomas Sotinel reports on the success of the sitcom.

SOMETIME in 1989, *Maguy* will become, for one show, *Maguy-Antoinette*. In France, even the situation comedies can't escape the bicentennial spirit and *Maguy*, recently crowned "Queen of the Sitcoms" by the press, has to celebrate the 1789 Revolution one way or another.

But in France, the sitcom revolution started a few months ago, in September 1988. Of course *Maguy* — the first domestically produced sitcom aired in France — was launched by state-owned Antenne 2 in September 1985. The show became a hit, one of the few Antenne 2 could claim in its war against privatized TF1. Programmed at 19.30 on Sundays, pitted against TF1's 7/7 weekly news show, it usually reaches 20 per cent of the audience.

But between September '85 and September '88, only one new sitcom was launched, TF1's *Marc et Sophie*, in September '87: a weekly show made by the same people, (producers Télé Images) who produced *Maguy* with similar results. On Saturday evenings it captures 21 per cent of the audience. Then came the great battle of 1988.

A2 ratings had been steadily dropping against TF1's. In the crucial 19.00-20.00 slot, TF1 was now airing the French version of *Wheel of Fortune* which took about 30 per cent of the audience whereas A2's competing programmes (original games, when A2 wasn't required by its charter to broadcast electoral propaganda for the two national elections France went through in 1988) never reached more than 10 per cent: an unbearably low figure for a slot that largely determined the ratings of the 20.00 newscasts. (There was an exception: during the summer, when the channel broadcast reruns of *Maguy*, at last the ratings topped the 10 per cent figure).

So, in September 1988, with the elections behind, Antenne 2 wagered on sitcoms in order to break TF1's grip on the 19.00-20.00 slot. A2 programmed five sitcoms (see opposite) all brand new, one for each day of the week. Meanwhile, in the daytime La Cinq launched *Voisin Voisine* (roughly translated as *Neighbours*), a daily one-hour show produced by Espace Images.

The launching of the five 19.30 sitcoms coincided with a protracted strike at Antenne 2 that — among other things — deprived the channel of its share of the Seoul Olympics and provoked a further drop in its market share. But when the strike settled and the sitcoms were allowed to take their course the figures didn't improve. *Wheel of Fortune* still took 30 per cent and the sitcoms between six and 10 per cent of the audience depending on the nights, with drops as low as 3.4 per cent.

At the time of the launching, Jean Rouilly, A2's joint managing director claimed "that the *Wheel of Fortune*'s course would now be reversed", and that the channel's policy was a "bet on French filmmakers' and authors' creativity and talent". But even before the first results were in, several prominent professionals had publicly expressed their doubts about the wisdom of A2's programming. Among them was Pierre Lescure, head of the successful pay-TV channel, Canal Plus, who said "The sitcoms' vertical programing is a serious technical mistake".

It took A2 managers two months to acknowledge the mistake: at the start of November they replaced the vertical programming by three-week stints for each show. But, as luck would have it, the only series for which enough shows had been shot was *Tel père tel fils* which had been branded by the critics as the worst of a rather poor bunch.

Today, Jean Rouilly admits that the channel was over-ambitious in deliberately going against all established patterns of audience behaviour: "we should have tested the shows, with audiences, and above all on other time slots. But we didn't have the time. The only way vertical programing could have worked would have been to do it with shows which already had audiences". Geneviève Auffredo, in charge of soaps and sitcoms at Antenne 2, also blames the September failure on the lack of time: "We ordered the five

sitcoms at the end of '87. With more time we could have, for instance, chosen different settings for the sitcoms instead of setting them all in apartments".

At the time of writing, A2 has scheduled a new series of *Tel père tel fils* (Like Father, Like Son) for January, after airing *La Baby-sitter* and *Loft Story* in December with marginally better results (the audience share sometimes flirted with the 10 per cent mark) while still looking for new ways to fight *Wheel of Fortune*. Auffredo says that the sitcoms do have a future on the channel, but "maybe not at 19.30. One of the reasons for the *Wheel of Fortune*'s success is that people can do other things while watching it, which they can't with sitcoms. Maybe they would fit better at 18.30-19.00".

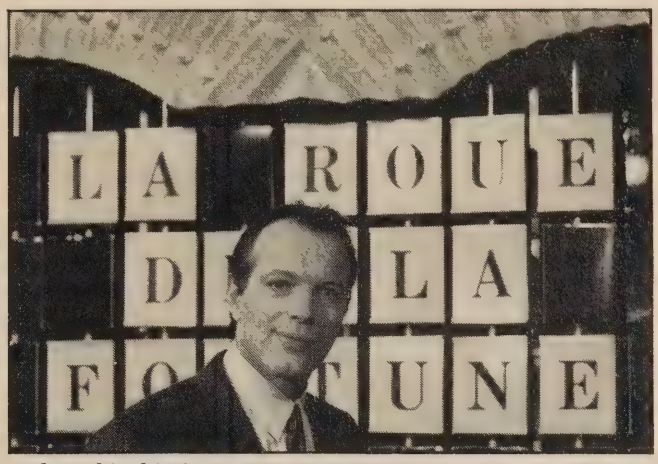
But A2 has to broadcast FR3 local news every day between 19.10 and 19.35. Until this obligation is lifted (which could come as early as February) Rouilly and Auffredo can see no end to A2's early-evening headache.

But however big the fiasco, and multiple its reasons, the professionals all agree on one point: French sitcoms are here to stay.

GUY DELOOZ is head of production at Télé Images *(Maguy, Marc et Sophie,* TF1's Sunday show *Vivement lundi, Tel Père tel fils)*. The company started expanding with the success of *Maguy* and thanks to the booming sitcom business has become one of the major TV producers in the country. Delooz thinks that sitcoms have brought a revolution to French TV producing habits: "When A2 decided to go ahead with *Maguy*, the natural producer for that kind of show was the SFP (a state-owned production company) but it so happened that they were more expensive than we were".

The average cost of one hour (two 26 minute shows) of sitcom is FFr 1,500,000 (US$250,000). Delooz says that between 20 and 25 per cent of that figure goes to the cast, about 40 per cent to creative expenses (writers, directors, designers, costumers...) and about 40 per cent to technical expenses. Télé Images doesn't own production facilities, and technical duties are handled by VCF. The sitcoms are almost exclusively funded by the broadcaster but firms like Télé Images or Espace Images bring some money of their own to retain the co-producer title.

Some sitcoms have been sold on French speaking markets; Hamster's *Douce France* is already a big hit in French-speaking Switzerland. Télé Images has even managed to sell the *Marc et Sophie* format to Reed Entertainment of the US.



The Wheel Of Fortune battles with Maguy for primetime viewers.

THE BIRTH of the sitcoms in France coincided with the movie industry crisis. With the demise of the movie shorts,

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Make 'em laugh

THESE ARE the main French sitcoms currently on the air. All were co-produced by the broadcaster, the producers whose manes are given are credited as co-producers and executive producers.

Maguy: based on the American *Maud,* the show is produced by Télé Images and is broadcast by Antenne 2 on Sundays at 19.30. It stars stage and movie actress Rosy Varte as Maguy and comedian turned actor Jean-Marc Thibaud as her husband George. Written by Stéphane Barbier and Guy Gingembre, the first shows were based on *Maud* scripts but for the last three seasons all material has been original.

Marc et Sophie: also produced by Télé Images, aired by TF1 on Saturdays at 19.30 since September '87. The title characters are a husband and wife team — he a veterinarian, she a physician — who share the same waiting room. The show is written by Barbier-Gingembre and stars Gérard Rinaldi and Julie Arnold. It gets an average rating of 21 per cent.

The following five sitcoms were launched in September 1988 on the 19.30-20.00 slot on weekdays, on a "vertical programming" pattern, that is one different show was aired every day of the week. In November, A2 reverted to three weeks stints with the same show (using only three of the lot: *Loft Story, La baby-sitter* and *Tel pére tel fils,* but production hasn't stopped on the two remaining shows and the channel is adamant they will be aired in the near future) and their latest audience share is 8.5 per cent.

Loft Story: produced by VTR, this is the story of a single man (comedian and movie actor Francis Perrin) who lives in a converted loft and has an on-off relationship with his mistress.

La Baby-sitter: produced by GMT, starring debuting actress Véronique Boulanger as a student who tries to make ends meet by baby sitting for various families.

Tel pére, tel fils (Like Father, Like Son): produced by Télé Images, it is based around the relationahip between a widower (stage actor Jacques Balutin) and his only son (Pierre Deny) who share the same apartment. The writers include Barbier and Gingembre.

L'appart' (The Flat): produced by the SFP, it stars Roger Pierre (who formed a popular comedy team with *Maguy*'s Jean-Marc Thibault in the fifties and sixties) as the head of a problem-ridden family.

L'homme à tout faire: produced by the SFP, it uses Thames' *Man About The House* format (which became *Three's Company* in the US) and stars young unknown actors.

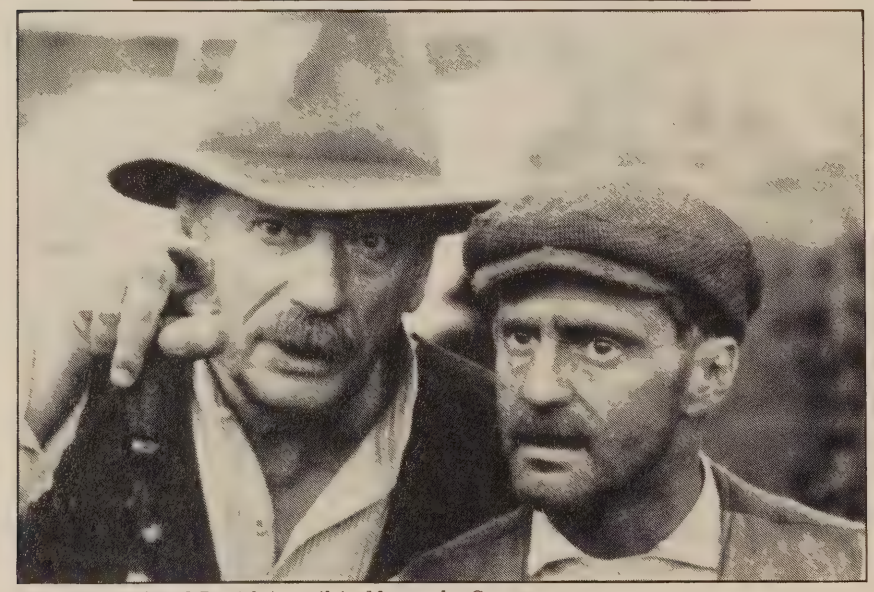
Vivement lundi *(Can't Wait for Monday):* another Télé Images product, it is a workplace sitcom that TF1 has been broadcasting on Sundays at 18.00 since September '88. It gets a 12.6 per cent share of the audience and stars movie and stage actor Bernard Menez.

Douce France *(Sweet France):* presented as a "second generation sitcom" by Hamster, its producer, the show will be the first sitcom to be set in a provincial French village complete with café, marketplace and town hall on the SFP Francoeur lot in Montmartre. Pierre Grimblat, Hamster's president, claims that, although the sets are more expensive and a larger cast will be used, the budget is the same than for other sitcoms but that there will be more money on screen than off. *Douce France* is written by Barbier and Gingembre. The show is aired by TF1 on Sundays at 18.30 since January 8 1989. At the time of writing, no audience figures were available.

Voisin Voisine *(Neighbours):* this daily one-hour show is aired by La Cinq around 10.00 with a rerun late at night. Produced by Espace Images it falls somewhere between the soap and sitcom format.

Out of the wasteland

French home video looks set for success in '89, thanks to a long-awaited truce with the government and an upturn in sell-through sales. Thomas Sotinel reports.



Yves Montand and Daniel Auteuil in Manon des Sources.

FRENCH HOME VIDEO professionals are starting to feel optimistic for the first time in five years. After years of successive catastrophes that have changed one of Europe's most promising markets into a quasi-wasteland, 1989 could be the year when French home video starts growing again for two reasons: a truce has at last been called between the government and the home video business; and second, the sell-through market is expanding rapidly.

In 1983, France had one of Europe's highest rates of VCRs per inhabitant with 1,500,000 machines, and something like 2,500 videostore (or video-club, as they are called in France) rental outlets. Then, as a part of a series of protectionist measures taken against the growing trade deficit, the government imposed quotas on the number of VCRs imported from outside the EEC, levied a heavy licence fee on VCRs and raised the sales-tax rate on both VCRs and pre-recorded cassettes from 18.6 per cent to 33 per cent. This coincided with the launching of three new channels between 1984 and 1985, the first of them being Canal Plus, the over-the-air pay TV service which became a direct competitor for video.

The number of video-clubs dropped rapidly to around 1,500. While there were 60 distributors, now there are no more than 40 — with the French subsidiaries of American majors taking about 50 per cent of the market.

Last year Minister of Culture, Francois Léotard lifted the VCR licence fee which boosted sales of VCRs and provided a much needed psychological incentive to the video-clubs. Until then many customers had been afraid to rent cassettes in fear that their deposit checks be used to track VCR owners who had failed to declare their machine.

Since December 1, 1988, the sales-tax rate has been lowered to 28 per cent. However, during the spring presidential campaign, Pierre Bérégovoy, François Mitterrand's campaign manager, now the Finance Minister, had pledged to return to the original 18.6 per cent rate. As late as September the socialist government still planned to go ahead with this move, but at the eleventh hour the rate was fixed at 28 per cent to fund social measures. The video business, which demands an alignment of the video VAT rate with that of books and theatrical movies (i.e. 7 per cent) was of course disappointed.

Hervé Pasgrimaud, secretary of the Chambre Syndicale de l'Edition Audiovisuelle (the Video Distributors Association), explains that not only did the new rate fall short of distributors' and retailers' expectations, but the way it was set plunged the market in to chaos "with the development of sell-through, big retailers had already planned ad campaigns based on prices that were set in anticipation of a 18.6 per cent rate. So when the rate was established at 28 per cent the stores had the choice between losing their margin or returning the cassettes to the distributors".

Paul Sultan, owner of Palace Video, one of the largest videostores in Paris, does 80 per cent of his business in rentals and is also clearly disappointed. As a member of the recently-formed Association des Video-Clubs Professionels, (AVCP) he believes that "the drop in the rate is too small to be felt in the rental fees" (which go from FF15 to 30 (US$2.50 to US$5) per cassette per day). "All it will do is give us some breathing space. But after all we have taken these last years, we really needed it". However, Pasgrimaud points with satisfaction to the new commitment of Culture Minister Jack Lang, back in office since last May, to a further lowering of the tax rate, and hopes that France will have aligned its rate with those of Britain and Germany by 1992.

Although the final figures are not in, the CSEA early estimates put the rise in the global video turnover in France at 20 per cent from FF1,100 millions (about US$184 millions) in 1987. And all of the growth was generated by the development of sell-through. The number of cassettes sold has rocketed from nine million to 13 million.

Warner Home Video was the first company to launch an extensive sell-through marketing strategy by developing collections (James Bond, Clint Eastwood, Hollywood Classics). Marc Bonduelle, the company's manager says that sell-through accounts for 50 per cent of the company's turnover. In 1988, Warner sold about 50,000 units of its biggest hits such as *The Living Daylights* or *Lethal Weapon*. "The French market had been underestimated," says Bonduelle. "This is a country of movie buffs and it makes sense for them to buy movies."

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Another body to regulate TV

The French are changing their broadcasting regulators yet again, in the hope that this time they'll get it right — but it's never easy, reports Jack Monet.

THE FRENCH are starting 1989 with a new regulatory body, the Consiel Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA), the third in eight years, and a new array of laws governing television.

This also will be the year the most powerful and sophisticated of the European satellites, France's orbiting TDF-1, begins beaming programmes to a footprint covering Western Europe.

That means, too, the formal broadcasting debut of La Sept, the French version of a European cultural channel, in which West Germany recently has become a partner. La Sept, which has pumped huge sums into producing films and documentaries, often in partnership with other European companies, is the only assured rentor for one of the four transponders on TDF-1.

The new regulatory body, the CSA, succeeds the Commission Nationale de la Communication et des Libertés (CNCL). The major new facet of the CSA is that it will have greater powers to punish charter violations by channels.

Nothing was more obvious in the short-two-year history of the CNCL than its impotence in enforcing charter obligations of the private channels. The CSA, in addition to the ability to impose heavier fines, will have the power to annul broadcast concessions in the case of severe charter violations. La Cinq, in particular, and to a lesser extent TF-1 and M6, have often been faulted on a number of charter violations. These include, notably, a failure to meet set levels of production of French programmes, keeping within maximum total advertising guidelines, and breaching of rules on when feature films can be broadcast.

La Cinq has also been chastised for broadcasting too many feature film titles during the year and programming erotic titles during prime time. With a broadcasting schedule based heavily on US series, La Cinq has not come near its charter obligations in producing French programmes or in scheduling French and European programmes.

In another incident involving La Cinq, the channel was on the losing end of a French landmark law test in which heirs of American film director John Huston succeeded in preventing the channel from broadcasting a colourised version of the classic black and white title *The Maltese Falcon*.

The CSA is the latest French attempt to create an independent television-radio system, separating a broadcasting regulatory body from politics. But it has a handicap in that its creation coincides, as did past regulatory bodies, with a change of government.

Until the 1980s, France did not have a regulatory body, just tight government supervision of three state television channels and state radio. Television and radio coverage of politics may not have been quite as poor as that of a banana republic, but it flirted with that level.

When the Socialist Party came to power in 1981, stung by conservative control of broadcasting for 23 consecutive years, it created the High Authority regulatory body. Nine members were named, three by President François Mitterrand (a Socialist), three by the president of the National Assembly (also a Socialist) and three by the president of the Senate (a conservative), assuring a Socialist majority of six to three in the High Authority. Then the conservatives gained control of the National Assembly and the government in the 1986 elections. They organised a new regulatory body, the CNCL, with 13 members. Many of its members were chosen by state institutions recognised as conservative, this time assuring a heavy conservative majority in the regulatory body.

It did not help the reputation of the CNCL that one of its members, Michel Droit, representing thè Academie Française, was brought under investigation by a magistrate for alleged corruption in the CNCL award of a license to La Cinq.

After a well-publicised, year long inquiry, an investigating magistrate asked authorities on January 5 to indict Droit, a former journalist at the daily

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What a year! Plus ça change . . .

CANAL Plus, the enormously successful French pay-television service, with expansionist aims throughout Europe, is a strong candidate for two of the other transponders on TDF-1 (see main story). Canal Plus, plans to use the channels to beam its films and sports events to French and German Territories.

TDF-1 may start broadcasting in March. Its high-tech capacities enable it to broadcast the same programme in several languages simultaneously. Using the D2 MAC-Packet transmission standard, it also is the only operating European rival to Japanese proposals for a world standard in high definition television. Its rivals in 1989 European satellite programming include Luxembourg's orbiting 16-transponder Astra, and the planned satellite of British Satellite Broadcasting (BSB).

As 1988 closed, there was heavy stock market trading in the shares of the leading French national channel, TF-1, possibly a bid by British media baron Robert Maxwell to increase his 12% holding in the broadcaster.

Also as 1988 wound up, two other private national channels, La Cinq and M6, were embroiled in running battles with authorities over violations of their charters. If French government ministers have their way, a music-orientated broadcaster could replace La Cinq or M6 in the year to come.

So the turmoil that has marked the French territory in the 1980s — the creation of three private channels (Canal Plus, La Cinq and M6) and La Sept, plus the denationalisation of TF-1, all in the past four years and accompanied by escalated bidding for foreign programmes — looks like continuing into the next decade. ■

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Shopping at home — the French way

It's the ultimate in selling by television, direct to your home: Paul Michaud reports on the year-old success of tele-shopping on TF1 — now imitated on other channels.

WHEN HE decided to try out on the French TV audience a quintessentially American idea — the use of television to sell products directly to the viewing public — Pierre Bellemare, one of the country's most popular radio and TV personalities, was taking on quite a challenge. At the time it was even said that the idea was so American it could never work on French TV.

One year later, Bellemare has been the first to publicly proclaim the overwhelming success had by his daily programme, *Le Magazine de l'objet* (since renamed *Tele-Shopping*), and how, with a turnover of over 210 million Francs (US$35 million) in its first year alone, it has become one of the reasons TF1 has proved to be such a profitable operation. In fact, the station's share prices have shot up almost 300 per cent since TF1 was privatised in the spring of 1987.

With some 500,000 items sold in its first year, and with more than 400,000 regular customers, the success of Bellemare's programme has indeed resulted in the creation of equally successful offspring on France's other privatised networks: Canal Plus, La Cinq and M6. The latter station's tele-shopping show, *M6 Boutique,* did so well in its first six months of operation that it now broadcasts every day of the week but Sunday.

Although all the French tele-shopping programmes admit they were inspired by such American originals as the Fashion Channel, QVC, and the Home Shopping Club, they point out how they've nevertheless taken an authentically French approach to the idea. Above all, the French have shirked the American idea of selling goods at discount prices, and have used the programmes to sell luxury items at prices that would be considered suicidal for the US-based home shopping shows. In fifteen minutes alone this fall, Bellemare was able to dispose of more than 100 diamond sets, although each one went for a hefty US$6,000.

Bellemare is proud to point out how he has been able to use his programme to showcase French talent, and give local craftsmen an opening to the outside world. "And," he says, "we've been able to introduce something that exists not at all in the United States: the notion of demonstration and presentation." In fact, fully one-half of each of Bellemare's tele-shopping programmes is devoted to showing the audience how the objects he's selling actually function; even at times offering a history lesson on their origins. In order to do this, Bellemare has recently reinstalled his tele-shopping operation in a house in a Paris suburb where the objects sold can be displayed in their natural environment.

Nowhere do you find on his programme, or on those of his French competition, any of the hard-sell techniques associated with American TV homeselling programmes. This even extends to payment for the objects, as customers are given six days to cancel any orders they might have placed. Because of such soft-sell tactics, notes Bellemare, he's been able to maintain so many faithful customers that fully one-half of those purchasing objects at a given moment are placing at least their second order. Some of the more regular customers were even invited to *Tele-Shopping's* first anniversary celebrations last October which coincided with inauguration of the show's new headquarters.

For the moment, four-fifths of Bellemare's customers are women (more than one-half are either retired or without a job), which is why he's attempting to find a way to reach out into the more prosperous parts of the French TV audience. Already, he's found that his Saturday morning show has done just that and plans in the near future to find further ways to enlarge his list of satisfied customers. ■

And now for the nudes . . .

Money isn't everything but it sure beats whatever's in second place — particularly true when applied to the 1988-89 offerings of variety programming on Italian television. Bogged down in cheap lewd stunts, this is not a good season. Stephen Dembner reports from Rome.

FANTASTICO, the Saturday evening variety package on RAI-1 tied to the national lottery and hosted by popular actor Enrico Montesano, has been rolling along at an average audience of nearly 12 million, or a 48-49 per cent share. Estimated cost per show, some 1.5 billion Lire (US$1.1 million) (including fixed overheads).

The Berlusconi response, *Odiens,* airing in the same time slot on Canale 5, has been garnering some 5-6 million viewers, or 25-29 per cent share. The production cost of *Odiens,* according to Vittorio Giovanelli, production director for Fininvest, approximately 750 million Lire (US$560,000).

"We made a clear decision to limit our production costs to something near 50 per cent of what they were last year in the height of the variety wars," said Giovanelli. "We haven't killed the variety show, we have simply opted for the power of good ideas over that of special effects, of the attraction of irony over that of huge numbers of dancers, and VIP guests."

Odiens producer Antonio Ricci labelled his programme "the first popular level national variety in the post Pippo Baudo era." However, in watching *Odiens,* one gets the clear idea that "good ideas" obtained on the cheap tend to be simply cheap ideas, or even cheap shots. The programme, hosted by ex-*Drive-In* hosts Ezio Greggio and Gianfranco D'Angelo seems to be composed exclusively of a series of predictable gags and rampant amateurism (for example a British woman who devoured enormous quantities of eggs and prunes in record time), overlaid with a heavy veneer of blatant sex. In fact, a spoof of a beauty pagaent aired on the first Saturday degenerated into a parade of smut. To make matters worse, this sketch was followed by an interview with Brigitte Nielsen in which she discussed her diseased uterus. Even in Italy, where anything relating to sexual issues is fair game as an audience accumulator, this seems to be stretching the limit. In fact, Franco Leonardi, television critic for the Rome-based newspaper Il Messaggero, quipped: "I hope we won't have to watch (Brigitte) Nielsen's operation in one of the upcoming shows."

Perhaps the closest thing to a show of good taste this season to come from Fininvest in the variety arena has been the cancellation of *La Verita Ti Fa Male* (The Truth Hurts) which was to have starred Serena Grandi, known primarily as an extraordinarily well-endowed soft porn actress.

In spite of the poor showing of *Odiens* in contrast with *Fantastico,* however, it bears noting that the Canale 5 offering is still by far the second most popular programme on Saturday evening, giving the lie to the much quoted observation that "variety is dead in Italy." In fact, the Italian public seems to be saying that, at least on Saturday night, variety, no matter what the quality level, still holds out strong appeal.

Reacting to this, Fininvest continues to move ahead with plans for relatively

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Fantastico's host Adriano Celenta with guest Gina Lollobrigida. The show still pulls a weekly audience of nearly 12 million.

TV soccer strikes back

Despite suggestions that audiences for soccer are declining, many TV companies are supporting the game and banking on good audiences, Noble Wilson reports.

CALL IT what you like — soccer, football, *futbol, calcio,* — according to all the available facts and figures it's the most popular sport in the world, and the one which is most watched on television. And yet people are talking of a decline both in attendance at matches and in viewing figures.

The fact that the UK ITV companies have recently forked out some £44 million (US$77 million), and that the BBC, together with BSB (British Satellite Broadcasting) has invested more than £30 million (US$52.5 million) in soccer contracts, does not suggest a lack of confidence in the future of the round ball. To the astonishment of a number of sponsors, Ted Turner has acquired the US English-language rights to the 1990 World Cup, to be screened on his TNT basic cable channel. In Germany, RTL Plus is paying hitherto unheard-of sums for the right to televise league matches. And the worldwide distribution of televised soccer appears to be on the increase.

So where is the alleged decline? In the UK, figures point to a dip in viewing for matches played in England after the BBC's long-running Saturday night *Match Of The Day* series ended some years ago. With no regularly scheduled spot, recorded highlights simply did not produce comparable audiences: at one time, *Match Of The Day* reached a peak of 13 million viewers — nearly double present-day figures. With soccer highlights once again regularly scheduled on Saturday evenings, the BBC is confident that from a 4 million start, audiences will have built to 7 million by the end of January, as was the case in the 1988 season.

In Scotland, by contrast, where separate deals are done between broadcasters and the Scottish Football Association, there has been no decline in viewing. According to Jim Hunter, Head of Programmes for BBC Scotland, audiences are a million up on last year. He attributes this to the comprehensive package of up to six Saturday soccer games which BBC Scotland, in collaboration with Trans-World International, puts together and transmits at 22.00 every Saturday evening of the season.

On Sunday afternoons, it is the turn of Scottish Television (STV), the commercial station for central Scotland: it has access to the same material, which it packages in its own way for its own audience. So the Scots soccer fans, who are even more passionate about the game than their English counterparts, are pretty well served. (There was a sharp fall off in spectators in Scottish grounds about eight years ago when the Association and the police cracked down on alcohol, and forbade all drinking inside the stadiums. Londoners could be forgiven for thinking that the Scots now save it all up for the internationals played in the capital.)

The UK Football League has noted a decline in attendances after the boom of the immediate post-war years, but it says that they are now up by 9 per cent over the last two seasons. It blames economic pressures and the tendency towards violence for the earlier decline, but is confident that the latter is now under control. Undoubtedly, the violence on the terraces both in the UK and abroad has kept some people away, especially those who were in the habit of taking their children along to matches. However, the measures which have been adopted to stop the consumption of alcohol, including the frequent use by police of closed-circuit television to identify trouble-makers, has greatly improved the situation. There are conflicting views about proposals to make entry to grounds conditional on the presentation of a special fans' identity card; but that initiative, together with the installation of more seating, may well be in the general interest. At the very least, it is likely to encourage more people to watch the game at home.

In Germany, where the television battle for the attention of the soccer fan is being fiercely contested, overall interest in all sports is decreasing. In a country where local and regional pride still runs high, soccer seems to have become too much of a show, or a business in which hired mercenaries are engaged to take on other hired mercenaries — a practice which does not seem to cause offence elsewhere in the world.

It seems clear that if there is a decline in the international popularity of soccer, it is only a small downward blip on a steadily rising curve. With more and more money being poured into the game, what will be the return on investment in terms of the ratings?

RTL Plus, through its holding com-

Scots footballer Kenny Dalglish.

pany UFA, has succeeded in buying up the rights to the German league games, which traditionally have been ceded to the public service channels ARD and ZDF, at a price of DM135 million (US$75.4 million). ZDF went to court, protesting that the coverage of RTL Plus did not reach a national audience, and that it should not have exclusive rights because it was not serving the whole German television audience. A somewhat complicated compromise agreement was reached for the experimental period of one year, during which ARD and ZDF, against a payment of DM25 million (US$13.9 million), would have access to four or five matches in the First Division, on a system of alternating priorities: They and RTL Plus would take turns, weekend by weekend, in having first choice of the matches.

RTL Plus is a rapidly growing, part-cable, part transmitter-delivered network, which has proved highly popular with German audiences. It sees soccer as an important element in establishing itself as a major presence in the German television industry. It is not at all happy with the deal with ARD and ZDF, not least because the ARD sports show on Saturday evenings goes on the air first, so that final scores are known before its own show starts. Needless to say, there are imminent re-scheduling plans. Whatever happens at the end of the year, it is certain that ARD and ZDF will insist on "news access" to matches. More legal battles may be expected.

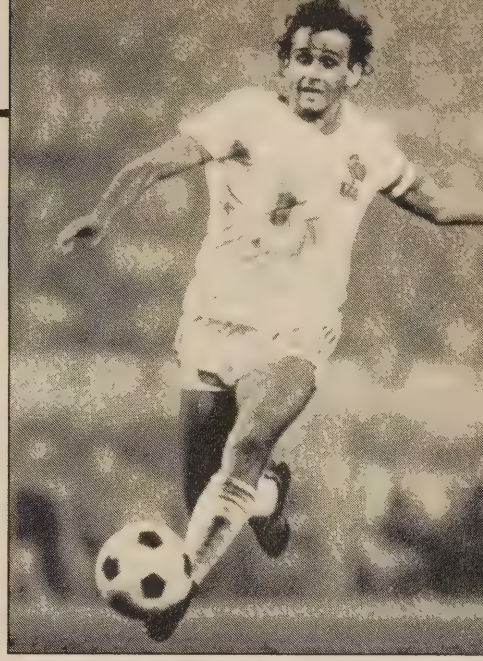
THE SCHEDULING and packaging of soccer are acquiring greater importance as more and more channels compete for larger slices of the available audiences. Sport as entertainment can be very popular — witness the BBC's quiz *A Question Of Sport,* which at the beginning of last December was attracting 11½ million viewers. Andrew Croker, Head of Sport of BSB (the British satellite broadcaster which will launch in the autumn), feels that first-class commentary, presentation, and scheduling can add a great deal to a match — always provided that the quality of the match itself is good. Networks, he says, should give themselves time to package live soccer games properly, by not scheduling too tightly around them. BSB is banking on soccer as one of its main selling points in persuading people to take the service, and plans to have live Cup soccer on Saturday evenings, live England international matches, and mid-week replays. It will also have access to "foreign football."

Along with BSB's film and entertainment channels, the Now channel, which will carry news as well as sport, will be delivered by direct satellite transmission. Would-be viewers will have to spend around £300 (US$525) on the hardware to receive the signal. However, *another* sports channel Eurosport, is due to be launched this month as part of the Sky Television service which will also be transmitted by satellite but in the PAL standard: a different type of aerial and decoder will be required. As yet, there is no suggestion that any of the new sports channels should be funded by subscription, although that day may come. What really terrifies most broadcasters is the thought of pay-per-view applied to sport. Thus far, Governments have rejected the concept, but in the philosophy of the free market, it may find acceptance in some countries. Commercially, it is an attractive proposition: five million soccer fans, each paying £5.00 (US$9.00) to watch a top-line match, add up to a handsome total.

There are now indications that pay-per-view is gaining strength in the sports market: the US net NBC, through its new partner Cablevision Systems Corporation, is planning to offer some of what it calls the "less popular sports" (including soccer) of the 1992 Olympic Games on a PPV basis. The estimated audience take-up is three to five million.

It will be interesting to observe what priority is given to soccer in particular, and sport in general, by the audiences to the new services in Europe. Screensport, which was first in the field (and

Commercially, pay-per-view is an attractive proposition: five million soccer fans each paying £5.00 bring in a handsome total



French soccer star Michel Platine.

which is in contention with the European Broadcasting Union over what it regards as unfair competition), has been picking up soccer matches from wherever it can find them. Screensport argues that were it not for the restrictions imposed by Article 37 of the Union of European Football Associations Agreement (which allows National Associations to prohibit overseas relays) it could obtain many more. And of course, the sports channels will be competing with film and general entertainment programmes — a source of internal family squabbles for decades.

Last autumn, the ITV network in the UK introduced a major new series of live soccer matches on Sunday afternoons — *The Match* was directly opposite the BBC's weekly compilation of its immensely popular *EastEnders* soap. It soon became clear that soap was beating soccer, so kick-off was adjusted by half-an-hour. This big live game achieved audience of around 6 million in the first weeks — a figure which was well below the 8 million which ITV had predicted. John Bromley, Controller of Sport at London Weekend Television, which covers the event, denied any such prediction, saying that ITV was well satisfied with the ratings so far and that he was confident that the audience would grow. In fact, the latest available figure (December 4th) showed an audience of 7.4 million.

There is some scepticism in soccer and media circles about how the World Cup soccer is going to be received by American viewers. Bill Sinrich of Trans-World International believes that soccer is difficult to sell to the US audience. However for college kids, and particularily the under-15s, it may go

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The gentle art of marathons

A sport has to be well-known in Japan before people want to watch it on TV — and it helps if Japanese people are taking part. Roger March reports.

QUESTION: What sport draws the highest ratings on Japanese television? If you said baseball or even sumo, try again. The answer is the marathon — preferably domestic.

Although the Japanese television viewer is truly international in culinary matters — finding equal fascination in an Ecuadorian goat dish and an Australian aborigine's meal of freshly unearthed witchity grubs — it is an entirely different matter when it comes to sports. Japanese have a very low level of interest in any sport that is not already well-known in Japan or which does not feature a Japanese performer. The recent Paris-Dakar Rally was widely covered on TV here because of the strong Japanese contingent. Meanwhile, in nine years in Japan, your correspondent has never seen cricket or field hockey introduced on Japanese television.

Marathons are mostly run in autumn and winter in Japan and the most popular are the Fukaoka and Tokyo marathons, both rating well over 20 per cent. Not lagging far behind in ratings terms is the Ekiden-marathon relay. The most popular is the University Hakone Ekiden, run on January 3 and 4 every year from Tokyo to Mt. Fuji and back; it draws about 20 per cent. Overseas marathons with Japanese runners are broadcast live but draw only 5 per cent at best, because of time differences. Marathon runners are told by the national athletic body what overseas marathons they are to run in, and the situation becomes very confused when companies who sponsor the runners press hard to have their runner participate in a particular race.

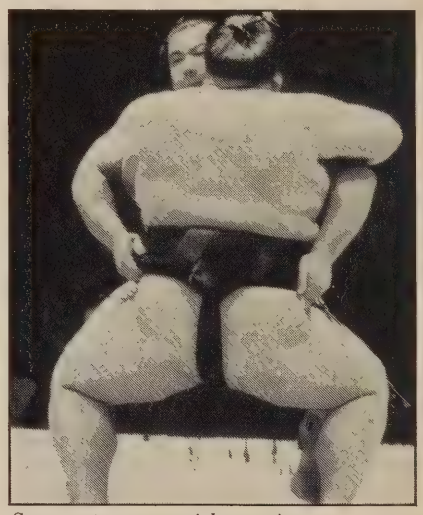
Baseball was not invented in Japan, although you would hardly think so. Befitting its extraordinary popularity (every broadcaster devotes at least 15 minutes every night to game highlights, not to mention the blanket coverage of spring training), and unlike *sakka, ragbi, gorufu* (soccer, rugby and golf) among other imported sports, the Japanese invented their own term for baseball — "yakyu". The deep-rooted popularity of the sport, introduced by an American teacher in the 1880s, owes much to the presence of the Yomiuri Giants. Japan's oldest baseball team, they were formed by the Yomiuri newspaper/television conglomerate. Nippon Television (channel 4 in Tokyo), owned by the Yomiuri Group, shows all the Giants home games that regularly rate from 15-25 per cent. (Only in the last couple of years have some stations tried to compete head-on by showing other professional baseball games in the same time-slots as a Giants game.)

Golf is immensely popular, particularly among businessmen as a means of doing business and relaxing. Every tournament is broadcast during the golf season, which extends from March through to November. The world's four major tournaments are beamed live to Japan (despite time differences), along with the World Matchplay Championship from London. And last year the Daikyo Open — sponsored by the Japanese construction company of the same name and played in Queensland, Australia — was broadcast live by the TV Tokyo broadcasting company.

Sumo digest

Sumo is broadcast live by public broadcaster NHK from 15.30-18.00 for all fifteen consecutive days of each tournament (six a year). TV Asahi runs a digest of the day's bouts for 30 minutes every night. Many years ago sumo was televised by a commercial broadcaster until the burden of finding sponsors for week-day time-slots became too onerous. Ratings differ according to how exciting a tournament is, but on the final day of a tournament an audience of 25 per cent is not rare.

Rugby is another popular television sport, particularly the traditional university and high-school competitions in December and January. The game which decides the number one rugby team in Japan, played on a public holiday in mid-January between the top university and industrial teams, is telecast by NHK and draws between 15-20 per cent. On the other hand, the World Cup was only a moderate success.



Sumo: not a commercial attraction.

According to Ichiro Higuchi of TV Tokyo, the youngest of Tokyo's commercial broadcasters, the ability to televise many of the more popular sports is limited by the long-standing relationships that exist between broadcasters and other media and sponsors. Forced also to take into account budgetary restraints, TV Tokyo opted to televise overseas sports events, such as the major marathons mentioned earlier and boxing (all Mike Tyson fights and middleweight bouts with Sugar Ray Leonard). "We're also interested in promoting relatively unknown sports such as hang-gliding and sky-diving", says Mr. Higuchi.

Tennis, motor racing and soccer are other sports watched with enthusiasm by the Japanese viewer. But unfortunately there are few signs that the Japanese viewer is willing to watch a sports event that does not feature a Japanese. There are some exceptions, like American football, where several US teams now play regular, televised (throughout Japan and to the US) season games in Tokyo during the winter. But most go the way of Australian Rules football. Post-season exhibition games were played in Tokyo in 1986 and 1987, but lack of attendance and dwindling sponsor-interest saw the game abandoned from last year. ■

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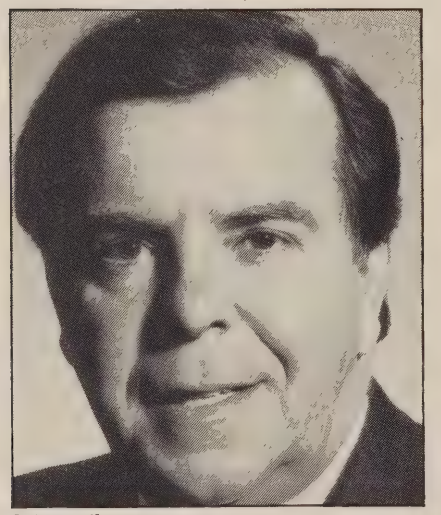
Oiling the wheels of PBS

For the past 18 years, Mobil's support of Public Broadcasting in the US has been as sole underwriter for *Masterpiece Theatre* and later *Mystery!* The Corporation for Public Broadcasting does not supplement Mobil's grants. Member stations do not have to pay for the programmes. There are no other sponsors. And the stamp of quality sticks to everybody. Arnold J. Friedman interviewed the new man in charge of Mobil's TV activities.

WHEN the Public Broadcasting Service in the US needed a little encouragement recently, its oldest friend signalled support and continued commitment by offering a three year renewal of its underwriting deal with WGBH-TV in Boston — with a price tag estimated at US$27 million. After all, what are friends for?

"We didn't have to," said Peter A. Spina, General Manager of Public and Government Relations for Mobil Corporation, adding that new management wanted to arrest all rumours about where Mobil's commitment to public broadcasting was. Mobil and PBS go back 20 years. They go forward at least another five, to 1993 — a year past the inauguration of a free-trade Europe that is intended to open up European television and which he expects will provide additional sources of programming for *Masterpiece Theatre* and *Mystery!* or whatever Public Broadcasting's changing audiences will be watching.



Spina: a silent partner.

"The question is: can we continue to acquire, from the same sources, the kinds of programmes that have been very popular on *Masterpiece Theatre?*" said Spina, referring primarily to the BBC. "I think those sources could dry up in about two years because of the changing television scene in the UK. They are in a revolutionary period right now."

He fears the trend for his present sources could be downscale, forsaking the large-scale costume dramas and period English quality programmes upscale PBS audiences favour.

For the first time this season WGBH tried a Canadian programme, with satisfying results, and Spina thinks that could open a new door for more. He says they could also look toward Australia and New Zealand. With careful dubbing, he added, the newly privatised industries in non-English-speaking Europe could come up with something in their style.

The decision is not actually his. Mobil is the grantor; the recipient is WGBH/Boston, which produces for the Public Broadcasting System. However, Mobil has been the sole underwriter for *Masterpiece Theatre* for 18 years, *Mystery* is eight years old (going on nine) and when people are married that long they tend to think alike. Their written agreement calls for consultation with Mobil, but Spina says it is the contact more than the contract — the close association over the years — that enables them to think so much alike and work so well together.

Six months ago they agreed to try something different and scheduled Channel 4's *A Very British Coup* for two nights this month. On its way in, the show won an International Emmy. Both

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Christabel, the story of an English woman in WWII Germany, will go out on Mobil Masterpiece Theatre on PBS next month.

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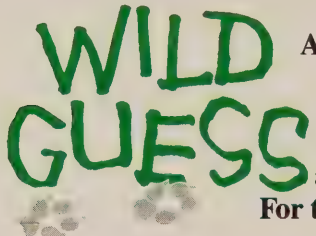

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Disney and PBS co-ventured with Anne of Green Gables, produced by Sullivan Films.

Oiling the wheels

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programme and presentation are unusual for *Masterpiece Theatre*. Unlike other *Masterpiece* offerings, the show is a fast-paced political drama in a contemporary setting, not period. In fact, it is set in post-Thatcher England. Scheduling strategy placed it the Sunday before the biggest sports event in the US, the football Super Bowl — and after the playoffs.

Programmes that once went automatically to PBS in the US are now being sought by some cable systems, like Arts & Entertainment and others. Recently The Disney Channel outbid Mobil and WGBH for an Australian series called *Shiralee*, but Spina says he may get it yet.

"I would have no problem saying, 'well, Disney has its run with a limited audience. It was not a *Masterpiece* audience by either size or focus. OK — we will take it for the second window.' This is new thinking for us, and WGBH is very flexible; so is PBS. They have to be careful of their (Public Broadcasting) mandate, but we've been brainstorming and there are lots of new ideas."

One of them being discussed by Paul Gerken, Mobil's executive in charge of production, is acquiring theatrical releases.

"For example," he said *"Room With A View* has a very limited art theatre run. Why not bring it to a *Masterpiece* audience?"

Gerken said they have also been discussing the launch of a *Masterpiece Theatre* line of home video cassettes, which he anticipates would raise the consciousness of the broadcast audience.

"It would extend our reach. Disney and PBS have co-ventured several times including *Anne of Green Gables* and its sequel and that kind of thing can work side by side."

Mobil and WGBH executives all know they will have to compete harder from now on, Spina said. *"Shiralee* was already completed and we were looking at finished tapes. We didn't move quickly enough and we were outbid.

"There are other ways of assuring product. If we make a development deal we get first opportunity on a project. We have invested 'seed' money overseas and will again, but not every project requires it," he noted.

Spina speaks as "the silent partner" of WGBH, which is partly because, unlike his predecessor Herb Schmertz, he wishes to keep a low profile — and partly because that's what he is.

"We approve what they like to do and part of our role is to say 'Yes, we will support you on co-development deals.' As an example: the ones that are presently extant with BBC and Granada — two places still making the kind of shows we like."

Mobil's affinity for corporate broadcasting sponsorship preceeds the 20 years of public broadcasting support by almost a half-century. In the 1920s a predecessor company was an early radio sponsor. In 1969-70 Mobil began sponsoring network programmes and

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Kiwis at the 'theatre'

FOR THE first time the Masterpiece Theatre concept has been used outside the US. In New Zealand, Mobil's public affairs representative brought the concept to TVNZ, recently realigned into general entertainment and cultural channels. With the WGBH/Boston presentation as an example, the network is now acquiring suitable programming and presenting it the same way, with the same corporate identification. The series is funded by Mobil, which was able to include its corporate name in the title: *Mobil Masterpiece Theatre*. (In the US it is *Masterpiece Theatre,* without the corporate identification).

Paul Gerken says he has had similar discussions with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, whose regulations preclude commercial sponsorship of any kind.

"We won't aggressively pursue it," he said. "But if Mobil Oil Australia notices how well their neighbours are doing with the concept, and they ask to talk with us about it, we'll be delighted to help them. Right now an Australian version of the PBS concept is not feasible."

Until the rest of the world's public broadcasters relax their regulations, it isn't feasible in most places. ■

Facing up to reality at NATPE

A sober mood follows a year of slow sales in syndication, but the boom in 'reality' shows could create some excitement at this month's show, reports Kathy Haley.

ONE WORD describes the mood of US television executives headed for this month's NATPE international programme conference in Houston (Jan 24-27): jittery.

Spot advertising sales fell far short of projections in 1988, leaving stations with almost no revenue growth and just as many faced exponential increases in programming costs. At the same time, an unusually high failure rate for syndicated shows that were launched in autumn 1988 — none of 13 new strips got off to a good start — left both buyers and sellers hesitant about what to try for 1989.

By late December, it appeared fewer new first-run shows would vie for time periods next season than did so a year ago. Joe Weber, chairman of NATPE and associate director of programming at advertising rep firm MMT Sales Inc., counted 23 major strips heading for the exhibition — down from 29 last year.

The number of syndication companies signed up to exhibit programmes was also down as of late December, from 220 last year to 205 this year, according to NATPE President Phil Corvo. Because some companies have merged or expanded significantly, however, the total floor space occupied by exhibitors will likely end up about the same as last year.

International exhibitors numbered 40 by late December, down from 44 a year ago. Drop-outs include Israeli television, Corvo says, and three other small distributors.

But the doldrums gripping both television and syndication in the US haven't prevented a hot format — the reality show — from whipping up excitement among programmers.

Leading the reality pack are the tabloids: half-hour shows that, like the newspapers that inspired them, offer hyped-up coverage of sensational stories. King World's *Inside Edition,* set for launch this month, and Paramount's *Tabloid,* targetted for premiere next autumn, have secured potentially lucrative 19.00 or 19.30 time periods on many of the stations that bought them.

Inside Edition promises slicker production than that found on *A Current Affair,* the Fox Television strip that recently emerged as a ratings-winner and sparked the tabloid trend.

Complementing the daily tabloids is Tribune Entertainment's *The Investigators,* a weekly hour hosted by Geraldo Rivera that promises to showcase investigative reports developed by local stations.

Joining the tabloids in competing for early-evening time periods is a new version of Group W Productions' *PM Magazine,* which aired nationally for 10 years but during 1986 and 1987, saw its station line-up dwindle to fewer than 20 outlets. The new show, *This Evening,* will be more reactive to the news and offer stories with a harder edge, according to Nancy Alspaugh, one of a team of producers who developed it.

Not far behind the tabloids in generating interest among station executives is Orion's half-hour strip, *Crimewatch Tonight,* Like *America's Most Wanted* — the highest-rated show on the fledgling Fox network — *Crimewatch Tonight* broadcasts pictures of criminals and encourages viewers to call an 800 number with information about their whereabouts. It also offers news about crime and information about how to avoid being victimised. Hosted by former CBS News correspondent Ike Pappas and set for launch next autumn, *Crimewatch Tonight* has secured afternoon, early evening and late evening time periods on a string of stations that includes one in each of the critical top three markets.

Approaching the public's apparent fascination with crime from a different angle is Qintex's *Crime Diaries,* a

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Cynthia Allison (left) and Jim Hastie host 'Reward', one of the batch of 'reality' shows debuting at the Houston NATPE.

Facing up to reality

▶ continued from p29

half-hour strip that could, depending on station interest, serve as an early evening news lead-in by targetting male and female viewers with stories about crimes and how they are solved. If stations would prefer a lead-out from network afternoon soaps that would keep women tied to the set, *Crime Diaries* will follow love stories that end in a crime, or crimes involving love.

Related to the crimecatcher but not quite as secure in its hold on programmers' imagination is the reward series, which got a test in December in a special, *Missing/Reward,* syndicated by Group W Productions to 110 stations. The show, and a possible spin-off weekly series with the same name, publicises rewards offered by individuals for retrieval of lost items, family members or friends. In the same vein is MCA Television's *Reward,* a proposed strip that offers large cash rewards for information leading to recovery of missing persons, property or treasure. Re-enactments and news footage add spice to the stories.

Then there are a pair of child-finder series, one of which will test the water in a trio of two-hour specials entitled, *America's Search For Missing Children.* If the specials — the first of which will air next month on at least 96 stations — show promise, M&M Syndications will follow with an hour-long weekly series. Also in the pipeline is *Has Anybody Seen My Child?,* a half-hour weekly series proposed by newly-formed Ascot Syndication Group for launch in April. Rounding-up the reality list is a trio of hour-long talk shows targetting the daytime audiences that have made *Donahue, The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Geraldo* solid success stories during the past two seasons. Paramount's *Joan Rivers Show* has the best shot at securing enough stations for launch, according to Janeen Bjork, programming vice president at advertising rep firm Seltel. She predicts the distributor's clout with stations will push sales over the threshold needed to cover costs. Competing with it are Barris Program Sales' *Kenny Rogers Show* and *Mother's Day With Joan Lunden,* which has aired for years on the Lifetime cable network and is being syndicated by Lunden's husband and producer, Michael Krauss.

Mike Levinton, programming vice president at another advertising rep firm, Blair Television, believes there may be room for two new talk shows in the morning primarily because *Geraldo* and Multimedia's *Sally Jessy Raphael* are moving to afternoon time periods. Like *Sally Jessy, Mother's Day* is being sold in either a half-hour or an hour format.

Reality shows may dominate NATPE, but they aren't likely to take all the steam away from a pack of game shows vying for early evening, afternoon and daytime slots. Generating the most interest, according to Seltel's Bjork, are a pair of celebrity game shows, Lorimar's *Third Degree* and MCA's *Star Play.* "Both are well-produced, fun-to-watch shows," says Bjork. "Their only drawback may be that they are similar to another celebrity game show, *Win, Lose or Draw,* which lost a lot of ratings ground this past fall." Celebrity games, notes Blair's Levinton, tend to have a short life cycle in which they shoot up in the ratings initially but then drop quickly after a season or two.

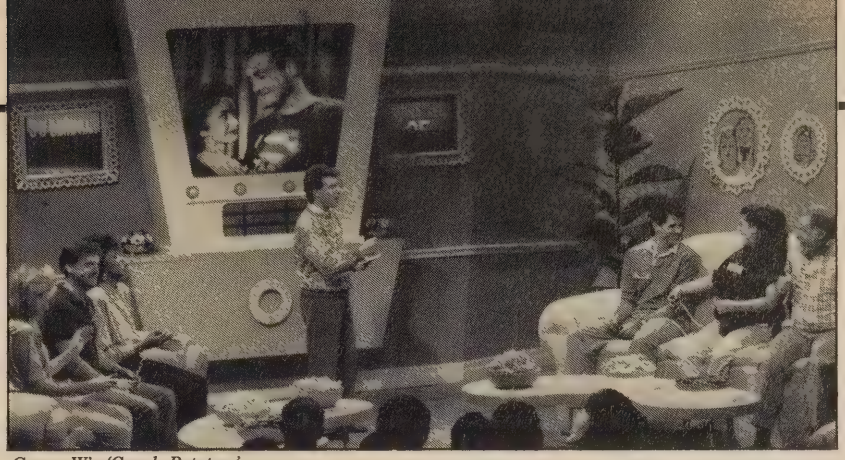
A recent addition to the game show pack comes from MGM/UA, which announced last month a proposed interactive game strip, *Hotline,* which would allow viewers to use an 800 number and push-button phone to compete for cash prizes.

Other game shows headed for NATPE include Group W's *Couch Potatoes,* a TV trivia quiz in which teams of contestants sit on oversized couches and snack on popcorn while they compete for prizes. *Celebrity Secrets* gets stars to reveal intimate personal facts. Finally, *Jackpot,* a comedy/riddle game that has aired on USA Network for several years, could enter syndication with the help of distributor Palladium Entertainment.

Along with reality shows and games, a handful of comedy shows targetting late-night time periods will also travel to NATPE. Paramount's *Arsenio Hall Show,* an hour-long comedy/talk strip, premiered this month while Worldvision's *After Hours,* which combines music, comedy, celebrity profiles and lifestyle reports, aims for a launch next fall. King World's *Off-Shore TV,* an off-beat comedy about a pirate TV station, will air in a test this winter on a small group of stations and target a national launch, if successful, next autumn. Still in development at Lorimar in late December was an unnamed avant-garde half-hour comedy strip designed for late night on independent stations.

While most of the US syndication market has undergone a shakeout in the past two seasons, the format that endured the most cutbacks is children's programming. Only a few original animated series are vying for time periods next fall. They include *Police Academy,* an adaptation of the hit movies offered in 65 initial episodes from LBS Communications and *The New Archies,* Claster Television's weekly half-hour starring the well-known

(Top) 'Lassie' lopes over the horizon again; (centre) 'American Gladiators' flex their muscles; (above) 'Huckleberry Hound' is back again.



Group W's 'Couch Potatoes'.

comic book characters. Worldvision is offering new episodes of its classic, *Huckleberry Hound.*

Along with the animated series are a handful of kids' game shows aiming to capitalise on the success Viacom's *Double Dare* enjoyed last season and Lorimar's *Fun House* has captured since September. Programmers warn, however, that kids games have already started to trend down in the ratings, as young viewers have tired of the stunts that punctuate the shows. *"Double Dare* started to drop in the ratings last July," Bjork says. "Kids' games have a year, maybe a year and a half before the audience gets tired of them."

Two-hour block

Kids' game entries for the autumn include MCA Television's *Pictionary,* in which children try to duplicate computer generated drawings and D.L. Taffner's *5-4-3-2-Run,* in which children run to point out the correct answer to a question. Worldvision's *Skedaddle,* another kids' game, will premiere as part of its two-hour block of weekend children's shows, *Funtastic World,* and expand later to a strip if it takes off in the ratings.

Generating the most excitement among kids shows is *Super Mario Brothers Super Show,* Viacom's adaptation of the popular Nintendo game. Produced by DIC Enterprises and set to launch this autumn as a half-hour strip, it follows the adventures of Nintendo characters in a combination of animation and live action.

Many of the programmes will be familiar to visitors, including a pair of revivals, MCA's *Lassie,* which will return in new episodes with contemporary themes and Palladium Entertainment's updated version of *The Lone Ranger.*

All American Television is marketing *Video Store,* a half-hour review of movies newly released on video, while D.L. Taffner has a weekly game show, *Talkabout,* in which contestants talk about a subject while they try to identify clues to an answer that will enable them to win prizes.

Roller Games, from Quintex, offers an updated version of the old roller derbies that once filled weekend hours on independent stations and *American Gladiators,* from Samuel Goldwyn, offers what one programmer called "a battle of the network stars, wrestling and roller derby all rolled into one." Can TV get any stranger? Stay tuned. ■

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NATPE

Instead of wandering around for three days trying to find a particular stand, refer to TV World's guide to the companies and their booth numbers. This information is the latest available as TV World goes to press (mid-January). Non-American exhibitors are listed in bold type.

Company	*Booth*
ABC Distribution Co.	340
Act III Publishing	500
Airborne Express	212
Alfa International	1517
Alin-TV	632
All American Television	1119
American Motion Pictures	524
Amvest Video	1628
Anglia Television Ltd.	939
Applied Information Management	1101
Arbitron Ratings	1549
ARP Films Inc.	1429
Ascot Syndication Group	1534
ASI Market Research	829
ASTA	237A
Avery Productions	855
Bandai Co., Ltd	1612
Barris Industries Inc.	737
Baruch TV Group	1259
Bavaria Film	1211
BBC TV Training	336A
BBC/Lionheart TV	1337
Behrens Productions Inc.	1302
Biznet/US Chamber Of Commerce	1300
Blair Entertainment	749
Blair Television	1319
BBPME	361
Brite Voice Systems	411
Broadcast	437
Broadcast Management Plus	365
Broadcast Resource Group	1501
Broadcast Standards	336
Buena Vista TV	971
C.B. Distribution	1111
Calgary TV Ltd.	362A
Camelot Entertainment Sales	1249
Casablanca IV/AMG	1569
CBS Affiliate Relations	303AB
CBS Broadcast Int'l	457
Central Television Enterprises	939
Cinar Films	1312
Cine-Groupe J.P. Int'l.	1312
Claster TV Production	771
Columbia Pictures TV	1049
Coral Pictures Corp.	759
Corposant Communications	529
Cycle Sat, Inc.	1629
Devillier Donegan	772
Dynocomm Productions	311
Ebony/Jet Showcase	1457
ECI Marketing Inc.	420
Electra Pictures Inc.	1564
Electronic Media	341
Emery Worldwide	516
Enoki Films USA	334A
ESPN	340
Excel Telemedia	963
Extra Extra	1502
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Filmworld TV Inc.	901
Fishing The West, Inc.	711
Four Star	1411
Fox Lorber Associates	1512
Fremantle International Inc.	1439
Fries Distribution	930
Gaylord Syndicom	1311
GE American Communications Inc	1631
Genesis Entertainment	972
GGP/GGP Sports	511
Global Vision Group	449
Globo TV Network	460
Granada Television	1200
Group W Productions	629
Group W TV Sales	629
Groupe Multimedia Du Canada	1312
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Harmony Gold	1229
Hecht Custom Photo	423
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Hollywood Reporter	1301
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Ironstar Communications	1312
ITC Entertainment	549
Jim Owens & Associates, Inc.	310
JM Entertainment Inc.	1030
Katz Television Group	519
King Features	949
King World	1237
Koch-Silberberg Communications	1064
Lage Enterprises	1523
Larry Harmon Pics	849
LBS Communications	1011
Lorimar Syndication	950
Lutheran Television	315
LWT International	1230
M&M Syndications	1130
M.A. Kempner, Inc.	901
M.K. Thomas & Co.	534
Major League Baseball Productions	1463
McGlughlin, Piven, Vogel, Inc.	435
MCA TV	472
Medallion TV	601
Mediacast Television Entertainment	323
MG/Perin Inc.	1429
MGM/UA Television	1035
Michael Krauss Syndication	337
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Muller Media, Inc.	1029
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Orbis Communications	1149
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Raycom Inc.	1421
Raymond Horn Syndications	255A
Reel Movies International	359
Republic Pictures Corp	1139
RTVE/Radio TV Of Spain	441
S.P.E.X. Group Inc.	416
Samuel Goldwyn TV	919
Scott Entertainment	855
Select Media Communications	1449
Seltel	837
SFM Entertainment	833
Silverbach-Lazarus	911
Simcom Int'l	1312
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continued on p38 ►

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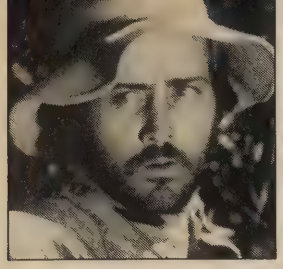
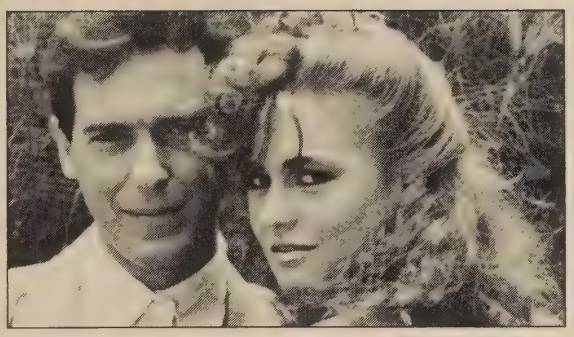
- Italian syndication has bought 600 hours of television novels and documentaries. Presently being aired over network television.





- Britain purchased a 35-minute special and 15 half-hour episodes of "Your Show of Shows."

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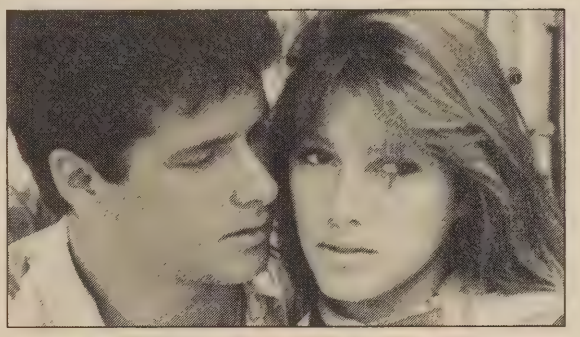

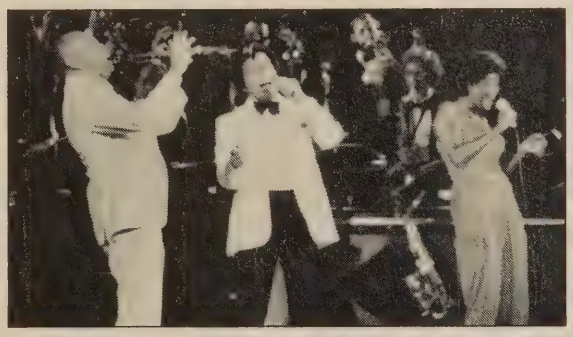

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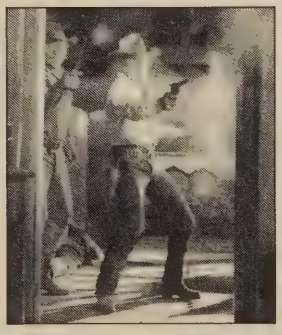

The art of comedy

▶ continued from p15

young filmmakers and actors have few opportunities to prove their worth — sitcoms can provide them. The other comedies have followed the guidelines laid by *Maguy*. They have generally used stage actors who are considered "more reliable" in Delooz's words (and are used to long term commitments), for the main parts, while asking movie actors to guest star.

According to producers, the only organization they have a problem with are authors: French laws on artistic property are very stringent and according to Delooz, "if an author refuses to change a script according to our wishes he is in his right. He can take us to court. If an actor or a director disagrees, we find a compromise, or he goes. But this is impossible with a writer". But *Voisin Voisine* producer Sylvine Bailly thinks that the problem lies more in the authors' attitude than in the possible legal problems. Writers Stéphane Barbier and Guy Gingembre who penned *Maguy, Marc et Sophie* and *Douce France* have even become sort of media celebrities both by writing hits and by claiming their unabashed commercialism. "We don't care for writers' anguishes or the writing-with-a-pen-inked-in-blood attitude", read one of their recent interviews.

Maguy: set to celebrate the bicentenary.

Espace Images, the firm which produces *Voisin Voisine* for La Cinq has taken the system much further. La Cinq ordered the 380 one hour shows to reach the quota of original French fiction its charter required. But from the start, the producers knew that the cost couldn't exceed FFr 150,000 (US$25,000) per show. Sylvine Bailly, Espace Images co-manager explains "We have built three sets. In the morning, one set of actors and technicians rehearse while another shoots. In the afternoon they switch. We started shooting the series last August, and as of December we had already shot 160 hours". Of course, the largely improvised show, played by unknown actors, is a daytime product with an average audience share of 0.5 per cent. While Bailly admits that the show isn't a high quality product, she claims that the know-how her firm has acquired through *Voisin Voisine* will allow the company to gain a share of the growing daytime market in France.

The general opinion is that sitcoms need time to find their audience, and that there's room for a few more successful titles besides *Maguy* and *Marc et Sophie*. Producers and broadcasters point out that this new market has brought badly needed cash and jobs to the French TV industry. To produce *Voisin Voisine*, Espace Images has built a new studio and Hamster has created a video production subsidy in order to produce *Douce France*.

The big question remains the attitude of the government. Last fall, Communication Minister Catherine Tasca made no secret of her dislike of the A2 sitcoms and if her views prevail in the redefining of the mission of the public channels, some sitcoms may have even less to laugh about. ■

Teenager takes on wrestling giants

A 15-YEAR-OLD Canadian whizz-kid is behind an exclusive deal just signed by US-based distributor Raymond International. The show concerned is a TV wrestling series to be shot in Canada for the international marketplace.

Aaron Weiss, probably the youngest business entrepreneur in Canada, has just negotiated sole Canadian rights for Mario Sovoldi's *International Championship Wrestling* (ICW), an organisation which represents some of the biggest names in the wrestling game. Through this deal, Weiss will package 26 one-hour ICW shows.

Aaron Weiss.

Weiss started out as a fan at the age of 12 and made professional wrestling his single passion, even giving up a normal education to pursue his interest. Prior to this series, he acted as wrestling commentator and co-host on the Canadian cable service CITY-TV's *Major League Wrestling*, as interviewer on Rogers Cable's *Sportsweek*, and as commentator on Newton Cable's *On The Ropes*, where he now hosts and produces *Wrestling Review*, a live half-hour show.

The new series will be introduced by two one-hour specials; the first being shot at a live card wrestling extravaganza at Brampton Century Gardens Auditorium. The distributor, Bruce Raymond, said of Weiss: "Considering his ridiculously young age, he's a remarkable young man. I was fascinated by his articulateness and his knowledge of wrestling. He made a detailed and professional presentation that few producers four times his age are capable of. I felt that on camera he has a very good presence." ■

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BOOTH 460

GLOBO TV
NETWORK-BRAZIL

NATPE guide

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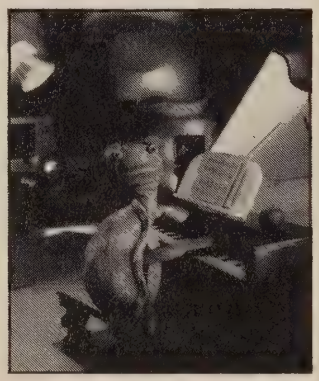
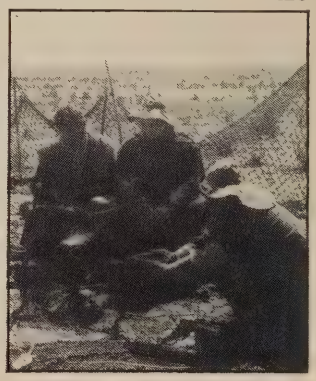
TVMC Audio-Visuel	1312
TVRC	244
20th Century Fox TV	1172
U.S. Army Reserve	439
U.S. Nippon Communications	1621
Ulster Television	939
Uniworld Entertainment	330
Unreel Producations	1614
Up With People	362
Variety	501
Vestron Television	1129
Via Le Monde	1312
Productions	1312
Viacom	811
Vid-Film Services, Inc.	412
Video Media Marketing Ltd.	1528
Video Tape Company	700
Video Yesteryear	356
View Communications	520
Visual Productions	1312
Wall Street Journal TV	1558
Warren Publishing	356A
WDR International	1211
Weiss Global Enterprises	900
Westernworld TV	300
Wold Communications	630
World Events Productions, Ltd.	1511
World Wrestling Federation	1535
Worldvision Enterprises, Inc.	571
Yorkshire Television	939
ZDF	1211
Zenith Productions	939
ZGS TV Production	426





Some of the shows from the non-US companies: *1. 'Max Haines Crime Flashback' (Cinevisa, Canada); 2. 'Wish Me Luck' (LWT International, UK); 3. 'Bino Fabule' (Ciné Group, Canada); 4. 'Reporters' (La Cinq, France); 5. 'Tod Dem Drachen' (Bavaria Film, W. Germany).*

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Oiling the wheels

▶ continued from p28

around 1976 the company ventured into first-run syndication.

However, it is the concept of Public Broadcasting that attracted and held Mobil. "The government charter allows corporate support," Spina said, "and we believe PBS is a good thing to support."

Mobile's 20 years with Public Broadcasting (they were early *Sesame Street* underwriters, when the Children's Television Workshop began) has provided the corporation with what Spina calls 'affinity-of-purpose marketing.'

"It's an association with quality and excellence consistent with the rest of Mobil's public image. For example, we have not missed a Thursday in the New York Times in 21 years," he said, referring to the paid editorials that traditionally run on the page opposite the newspaper's own editorials (the so-called Op-Ed page). The broadcast exposure parallels Mobil's presence in other media and its community and cultural participation.

"The audience we get on PBS is similar to the one we get in the print media."

Spina says what happens next relates to how they feel about what they do. "*Masterpiece* is a special show with a big reach into a special audience. It doesn't grow in leaps and bounds, but it hasn't reduced either."

He says Mobil intends to step up its promotional activities, concentrating more heavily on the local level — the stations themselves — to attract audiences. From day one, Spina recalls, Mobil has spent heavily on promotion, apart from the allocations for acquisitions. He attributes much of Public Broadcasting's recognition to Mobil money, especially during the early days.

"When we started, PBS was not a network. They practically ran programmes around the system by bycycle. We decided to promote the medium and we still do."

This year will see Phoenix, Arizona used as a test market. It was picked because it has been a major Mobil marketing area for ten years and because it has also a good cross-section of young and old residents, an academic community because of the university. And it's in the American southwest.

This is the year Mobil and PBS will go after the so-called 'Sunbelt' states and the rest of the west. Advertising and promotion dollars, Spina said, may shift from the north-east to south-west and other 'less sophisticated' markets, in an effort to broaden the viewer base. Trailers and tune-in material will be made by Mobil and serviced to stations, along with posters and other away-from-station promotion — and generous co-operative advertising budgets to get it used.

Mobil also intends to work closely with more vigour.

"We don't get all the PBS audience. Nobody can. But we could do a lot more to get people to tune in," said Spina. "We intend to work closer with those 330 stations out there. Maybe shift the emphasis away from just the major market areas. We've spent a lot in New York City, for instance. I'd like to work around the rest of the country and support their efforts.

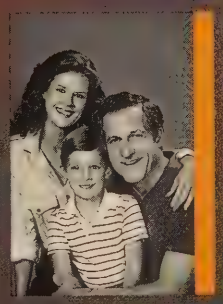
"We want to encourage stations to take a strong and active role in promoting their programmes and not just wait for something to come along."

Given the limited budgets and inadequate staffs with which many PBS stations must work, aggressive promotion may be a matter of degree.

"We know we have our work cut out for us," commented Gerken, sounding like he's had this problem before... ■

Bill: On His Own

The Jayne Mansfield Story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Cuba's festival

More than 120 companies from 15 countries attended last month's MECLA, the Latin American Film and TV Festival in Havana. Though crammed into a tiny hall, business was brisk, as Andy Rosenblatt reports.

ALTHOUGH there was a large amount of trade among Latin American countries, major buyers came from Europe, mainly Spain, West Germany, Scandanavia and the socialist countries. Total deals closed amd reported during the market add up to US$1.5 million — not counting deals concluded after the close of the market.

Argentina, mostly famous during the film festival because of its 1st prize with the film *Sur* awarded to Pino Solana, was represented at the festival by Argencine, The National Institute of Cinematography. They carried a catalogue of over forty feature films. Famous films such as *The Lost Republic, Murder in The Senate, The Kids of War* (about the Falklands War) and *Thanks for the Light,* by Uruguayan writer Mario Benedetti, were included.

Chile was also present in the event represented by TV Cine. Its catalogue carried mainly musicals and documentaries – some referred to Human Rights in their country. Documentaries were offered by most countries attending the market. Peru has good films to offer – drama and fiction – and its quality was also awarded at the festival with the film *La Boca del Lobo* (The Wolf's Mouth).

As host for the MECLA, Cuba was represented by Inter TV, the State organisation in charge of purchasing programmes for Cuban TV as well as for selling/trading Cuban films and documentaries to the rest of the world. Their extensive catalogue included musicals, performed mainly by Pablo Milanca and Silvio Rodriguez, as well as dramas and documentaries.

One of the hottest items in the Cuban catalogue was the set of documentaries directed by Estela Bravo. With important awards won in such festivals as Leipzig, Bilbao, Chicago and FestRio. Estela Bravo directed more than a dozen films about the Latin America of today. The military dictatorships, the struggle for economic and political freedom, problems of cultural identity and the tragedy of children who have disappeared are present in her documentaries made for film and television.

According to Enrique Soto, director of Inter TV, they were able to accomplish over one third of their annual export plan during MECLA. "The festival not only helps us as a selling tool, it also serves as a feedback of what the market trends are and what the market wants," Soto explained. "It helps us to evaluate and plan our productions for the coming year." In terms of barter, MECLA also serves as an important market, not only for Cuba but for the rest of the countries as well. Mario Martinez of Inter TV complained that they alone have covered 50 per cent of the barter trades planned for the season.

Perhaps the most interesting phenomenom that makes MECLA somehow different from other markets is the special "chemistry" caused by the Film Festival, the number of producers and directors that attend the event themselves instead of sending a sales or purshase representative, and the relaxed and friendly environment of Havana and its people. This chemistry produces a very important output: major co-productions between different countries. Television Espanola alone has several projects in production with Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela and Nicaragua among other countries. Other projects are under study. Famous, Colombian-born writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, now resident in Cuba, has a lot to do with many of the scripts to be co-produced with TVE.

Festival officials predict a very successful MECLA 89 since all particpants have comfirmed participation in the event. "This signifies the success of this market", explained Antonio Rodriguez. "As a difference from the other large festivals and markets known worldwide, MECLA opens a space to new producers from Latin America in need of worldwide exposure." ■

Briefly . . . Sky TV

Part two in TV World's series of round-ups of the new channels.

FEBRUARY 5 is the date that Rupert Murdoch's Sky TV will begin to change the face of European broadcasting. With the successful launch of the Astra satellite in December,Sky's six channels will be beaming to Irish and British viewers who are equipped with a satellite receiving dish, or are connected to cable television.

Sky has a distinct advantage when it comes to publicising its services, for Rupert Murdoch owns three national daily newspapers in the UK — the highly-respected *The Times,* The middle-brow tabloid, *Today,* and the UK's highest-selling paper (with 4.25 million readers), the raunchy, tabloid, *Sun.*

But it is not only in Murdoch's papers that Sky has been capturing one or two headlines, thanks to a timely dispute with the UK's ITV over the screening of next month's Tyson-Bruno boxing match (see World Round-Up).

Early in January Sky revised its initial, highly-optimistic,viewing projections, virtually halving the minimum number of homes it predicts will be receiving the service by 1990. Originally set at 2.5 million homes (a figure said to have been created by Murdoch himself), the minimum guarantee to advertisers is now 1.15 million. The company says it still regards the 2.5 million figure as achievable, but it is a "best-case" scenario.

Schedule line-up

Meanwhile, Sky is lining up its programme schedules in a bid to grasp the satellite market before rival BSB commences later in the year (see *TV World,* December 1988).

Only four of Sky's six projected channels actually start up next month. These are:

Sky Movies — possibly the most important of Sky's new services, as many observers reckon it is in the field of films and made-for-TV movies that the battle of the new channels will be fought. Rival BSB's The Movie Channel has lined up an impressive catalogue of films — probably better than Sky's — but does not have the six-month advance on the potential audience that Sky has.

Contracts with distributors include 20th Century Fox, 167 films from Orion Pictures, 80 pictures from New World International (an US$8 million agreement), and others from Warner Brothers, Braveworld and Touchstone Pictures. Big-name movies, which will be used to draw in the subscribers in the early months include *Robocop, Police Academy IV,* Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket, Platoon* (with Charlie Sheen), *The Witches of Eastwick* (Jack Nicholson) and *Nuts* with Barbra Streisand.

Sky Channel — a 24-hour general entertainment channel, similar to the Sky channel which has been broadcasting pan-European since 1983, with the addition of a few big names luted from the big channels. Programmes will include:-

- *Sky By Day* — hosted by Tony Blackburn, an ex-BBC radio disc jockey, and an established Sky personality, having hosted *Sky Trax* and *Sky-Fi Music;*
- *Pot Of Gold* — an amateur talent show;
- *The Price Is Right* — the age-old game, but there's still life in the show, commissioned from an outside producer.
- *Sale of the Century* — the well-known game-show, also an outside commission;
- *Derek Jameson Tonight* — hosted by the colourful Londoner, Derek Jameson, a former newspaper editor, who was sacked as editor of *The News Of The World* by its owner...Rupert Murdoch.
- *Overview* — a series of documentaries
- Soap-operas bought in from the US.

Sky News — An all-news and current affairs channel produced with material from WTN, Visnews, CBS (America) and Sky's own in-house news department.

Eurosport — all-sport channel owned by Murdoch and a consortium of European Broadcasting Union members.

In April, ***The Disney Channel*** from the US will take up another of Astra's transponders and will be offered as part of the Sky package but at an additional cost, for 18 hours daily.

And finally, ***Sky Arts*** commences in the autumn — a clear spoiler to BSB's launch in October. The existing Arts Channel was unsuccessful in its bid to be adopted by the Sky family, but a spokesman for Sky said that *Sky Arts* would be "pretty similar" in approach — that is, opera, ballet, the visual arts and so on. ■

Rupert Murdoch (top); Disney's The Wuzzles, and presenter Blackburn.

Next month: Briefly . . . W H Smith TV

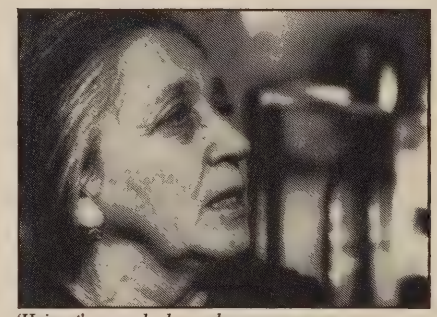
German shows in foreign sales bonanza

The 1988 ARD/ZDF programme fair in Munich boasted a new high in programmes shown and sold, as Germany's public broadcasters develop more business acumen. Wolfgang Fuchs reports.

AT THE 1988 ARD/ZDF Programme Fair last month there was a noticeable trend towards package deals and long running series, according to ZDF's head of sales, Rainer Regensburger. And the chiefs of the five ARD sales organisations corroborated this impression and were happy to say that things were looking ever better for sales of German TV shows to foreign stations, now that more and more commercial stations were starting up all over Europe.

"We have come a long way since ARD first tried offering programmes for sale some twenty years ago in 1968. It has been a long and stony road, but now things are looking up and we even have a group of regular customers", boasted Horst Vetter, head of Telepool, the Munich-based producer and distributor. ZDF joined ARD in selling German TV shows 13 years ago, and while they offer stiff competition to one another on German TV screens, they work hand in hand internationally because — "any ARD sale in the long run helps ZDF sell shows and vice versa", as Regensburger aptly put it.

While in the past sales usually centered on those programmes that had already displayed their popularity through longevity, now the success of German programmes on foreign screens has led to an expansion of interest in brand new German TV productions. ARD and ZDF did in fact offer a number of shows that have not aired in Germany at the time of the Programme Fair Screenings. Among these is a Telepool documentary series (co-produced internationally) about the beginning of World War II. Studio Hamburg's Gerd Richter-Kiewring believes German documentaries now compete successfully with those of the UK.



'Heimat': sequel planned.

Interest was high in new German drama programmes as well, in particular a planned 26 hour sequel to *Heimat* was well-received at WDR the western regional station. WDR's animated cartoon series *Janosch's Traumstunde* (Janosch's Dream Hour), thanks to the sale of its first 13 half hours to the Disney Channel, now has 13 new episodes to offer.

Bavaria Film, in turn, offered *Reporter*, a series to start airing in April in the Monday primetime slot, replacing *Pater Strohm* which is in (productive) hiatus. *Reporter* was greeted favourably on all sides, as was *Bastard*, a three-part mini-series about computer crimes.

Rainer Regensburger of ZDF was more specific about at least one of the feature attractions of ZDF, the long-running *Derrick*. When first sold to an Italian station, ZDF asked for DM40,000 (US$22,000) and gave a five-year permit of use. Now ZDF gets DM80,000 (US$44,000) per episode and grants only 2 years of use. Also of interest in this connection: ZDF pays for dubbing in foreign languages only if it retains rights to the foreign language version. Thus, French versions of *Derrick* can then be sold to French launguage Canadian stations by ZDF.

ARD's sales subsidiaries and ZDF's sales department are efficient and businesslike, yet they are still unhappy that profits from their activities do not flow back directly to those programmes or departments that garnered them. However, all revenues from sales do in fact revert to the programming and production facilities eventually, easing the cost factor of programming in general or of co-productions in particular.

ZDF's sales department had an annual turnover of about DM40 million (US$22 million), an amount running up to almost 4 per cent of ZDF's annual budget of DM124 billion (US$688 million). 20 per cent of this 40 million marks is net profit which goes back into producing TV fare.

Apart from the sales, just about everyone concerned said that the ARD/ZDF Programme Fair was becoming more and more important as a meeting point and centre for making international co-production agreements. So the Programme Fair now has a central part in the continuing drama of filling TV schedules all over the world. ■

NDR: new trading arm

AS SALES of German programmes expand, a new sales organisation has joined the ARD lineup: NDR International. Founded at the end of 1987, this subsidiary of the northern regional broadcaster NDR is now the sole representative of sales of NDR originated programmes, taking over distribution from former sales representative Studio Hamburg, another NDR subsidiary. While Studio Hamburg no longer handles NDR properties' sales it still acts as distributor for some of the other ARD stations.

NDR International will make international sales, video sales and merchandising sales. But it was also founded to become NDR's department of acquisitions of foreign programming. Furthermore, co-productions, motion picture projects and series production for pre-primetime are to be handled by the company. In a world of publicly institutionalised TV, this then is another fully commercial branch of public TV in Germany.

Is public TV getting commercial in Germany? No, according to the salespeople. Putting sales into the hands of subsidiaries or of sales departments is just one way of conducting the business efficiently while not burdening the public broadcasters with something other than producing and broadcasting. ■

Out of the wasteland

▶ continued from p16

Thierry Roegister who heads GCR (the joint venture RCIV and Gaumont have set up in France) is much more cautious about sell-through. His company is the market's leader in rentals and he thinks that rentals generate more money for the studios and that it allows a wider choice of products on the market. "If we relied on sell-through alone the only movies available on the market would be the most popular ones."

Videostore managers are also a bit reluctant when it comes to sell-through. "When I sell a cassette, my share is the price of one rental," says Paul Sultan. But he also acknowledges that sell-through is a developing trend that videostores will have to deal with if they don't want all the business to go to mass retailers. Warner does 30 per cent of its sell-through business with videostores, the rest with mass retailers. Some distributors have mounted promotional campaigns with hypermarket chains to market potential big sellers such as Proserpine's *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des Sources* (whose video rights had gone for a record FF8 million (US$1.35 million)) with Carrefour or GCR's animated feature *Asterix and the Britons* with Auchan.

Sell-through also benefits from the arrival on the market of new distributors — TV broadcasters and record companies — who sell non-cinematographic material. TF1's *Bébête Show* (a satirical puppet show which stars President Mitterrand as a frog reminiscent of Kermit) was one of 88's best sellers with 60,000 units shipped, as was Canal Plus's *Best of des Nuls* (a collection of the highlights of *Nulle part ailleurs,* the channel's answer to the US's Saturday Night Live). INA, the state-owned company which inherited the archives of the old DRTF, is marketing a collection of French TV classics and historical cassettes with the help of Euromarché, the hypermarket chain. But the market is still too narrow for French made-for video products to appear on the shelves.

The great unknown is the part compact disc video (CDV) will take in the market. While GCR's Roegister thinks that CDV will be rented, Warner's Bonduel sees it as a sell-through product because of the similarities between audio and video CDs. ■

Life on the other side

Noble Wilson attended a media conference in Paris, aimed at bringing East and West closer together.

NOT MANY people have heard of the Alerdinck Foundation. Set up in 1984 by Frans Lurvink, a wealthy Dutch businessman, the Foundation which describes itself as a "Centre for East-West Communication", brings together representatives of the television and print media of the United States, Europe and the Soviet Union at a series of conferences and through a programme of journalist exchange.

Lurvink's concern was that because the media of East and West were instrumental in creating and perpetuating the images and stereotypes of "the other side", they contributed to international tensions and dangers of confrontation. He wanted to find some way of opening minds and promoting greater understanding.

At the fifth Annual Conference in Paris in December, "glasnost" was very much in evidence, and the discussions on the overall theme of "New Futures for East and West" were remarkably frank. Indeed the whole mood was much more relaxed than it was at the previous conference in Budapest in 1987. Pierre Salinger, the celebrated ABC-TV Correspondent, and Vladimir Lomeiko, an "Ambassador at Large" of the USSR, co-chaired the conference which was attended by forty participants including the First Vice-Chairman of Gosteleradio, Leonid Kravchenko; ARD's Moscow Correspondent, Gerd Ruge; and Hungarian TV's Gyorgy Baló.

Shockingly open

The Round Table on the role of Communications in East-West relations was especially lively. Vladimir Molchanov, one of Soviet TV's most popular front men (and a star of last year's Edinburgh Television Festival), described the great difficulty which reporters had in adjusting to the new openness. No longer could they rely on a censor to cut out the awkward bits. Accountability, and Responsibility was now theirs. For management it was a case of "the fewer questions you put upstairs the better!"

The shock had been considerable: a number of reporters had resigned, and others had had heart attacks. At the last Party Conference, a straw poll among the media predicted by 97% to 3% that Soviet TV would not carry the Boris Yeltsin speech live. In this belief, a number of foreign networks accepted an offer from Novosti of a copy of the recording at US$1,000 a minute — only to find that they could have relayed it live, courtesy of Gosteleradio!

Reporting on the USSR from Moscow has become easier for American, British and Japanese networks: the Soviet Telecommunications body has installed video and audio circuits in the four US TV network offices, and in those of the BBC, ITN and NHK. Although signals still must pass through a switching centre, Soviet TV is no longer involved, and so correspondents are saved the trek out to the studios at Ostankino. And, of course, money is changing hands at US$50,000 per annum per circuit.

Newsgathering in the USSR, even in the age of "glasnost" can still have its hazards: recently a Soviet TV reporter was beaten up in Moscow by some people who objected to his report on the Armenia/Azerbaijan conflict. Anti-media feeling knows no frontiers, and the phrase "responsibility of the media" has taken on a new and different significance.

At the conference, plans were laid to produce a regular East-West Television discussion programme in which top reporters would debate the issues of the moment. The programmes would be made under the aegis of the Foundation, and would be offered to the world's networks. From time to time, the panel of journalists would seek interviews with world leaders to examine trends in international politics.

The only echo of pre-glasnost days came from the solitary Czechoslovak delegate, whose views of 1988 seemed to be filtered through spectacles made in 1968.

On one subject, everyone was agreed: the worst thing that could happen would be the failure of glasnost and perestroika. ■

France's new regulator

▶ continued from p17

newspaper Le Figaro. The newspaper is controlled by rightist French press baron Robert Hersant, who received a license to operate La Cinq in a CNCL vote in which Droit participated. Droit is accused of receiving some US$65,000 in income from Le Figaro while a CNCL member, in violation of CNCL regulations on income sources.

CSA selection

Now, the current Socialist government has established the CSA, resembling the old High Authority in that it has nine members, three to be selected by the Socialist president of France, three by the Socialist president of the National Assembly and three by the Conservative president of the Senate, again assuring a Socialist-influenced majority.

Whether the CSA becomes a lasting institution, surviving the next change in government — parliamentary elections are not scheduled before 1993 — will depend in part on perception of how independently it operates.

One of the major clauses of the law creating the CSA prohibits the private television channels from introducing more than one advertising-spot break in a feature film, made-for-television film, mini-series episode or documentary (there are no ad spots in comparable state television programmes).

Deficit-ridden La Cinq, whose major investors are Hersant, Italian media giant Silvio Berlusconi, and French industrialist Jérome Seydoux (also a 10 per cent shareholder in British Satellite Broadcasting), estimates that this rule could cost the channel some US$70 million in 1989. M6, also in deficit since its creation, foresees a loss of US$13 million in 1989 due to this rule.

It has been commented frequently that France's ad market cannot sustain five generalist television channels, as well as Canal Plus (which also accepts ads). In mid-1987, Catherine Tasca, a former member of the CNCL, took up this theme when she became state secretary for communication in the government. This has reinforced persistent speculation that the government plans to annul the broadcasting licences of either La Cinq or M6 or modify that of the state's FR-3 in favour of a music channel devoted to French music. The idea would be to defend the French music industry against the worldwide influence of English-language music.

Annulment

Annuling a broadcast licence would not be unprecendented; the conservative government did it in 1988 in replacing a previous la Cinq channel, created under a Socialist government by Berlusconi and Seydoux, with the operation now run by Hersant. The conservative government also annuled the licence of a previous M6 devoted to French music in favour of the generalist M6 operated by the CLT. One can easily imagine the Socialists ousting La Cinq on the grounds that it has not been meeting charter obligations, in part at least because there is not enough advertising financing for five generalist channels. ■

And now for the nudes . . .

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low-budget variety offerings. *Emilio,* starring the bizzare comedy duo Zuzzurro and Gaspare (also from the *Drive-In* stable), will air for 16 consecutive Friday evenings on Italia Uno from mid-January. Giovanelli estimated production costs at approximately 550 million Lire (US$418,000) per show.

The biggest evidence of budget cutting, however, will be on the new Canale 5 variety show to be hosted by Raffaella Carra on Friday nights, starting in mid-March. Carra will be playing with a budget of some 600 million Lire (US$456,000) per show, a dramatic comedown from the 1.2 billion Lire (US$912,000) spent on each episode of her not-so-successful Raffaella Carra Show that aired in 1987. However, Carra, who has been sidelined since then, is not complaining.

Odiens' Greggio and D'Angelo in their Drive-In days.

Back at RAI, the surprise success in the variety showplace has been *Biberon* (Baby Bottle). Based on a light theatre format and drawing heavily on cameo appearances by political personalities, *Biberon* has consistantly garnered audiences of more than 5 million for RAI-1, in spite of its 21.30 airtime on Tuesday evenings.

However, not everything has been wine and roses. Particularly the wine part. A RAI-1 one-off variety entitled *Una Giornata Frizzante* (A Sparkling Day), designed to promote Italian wines bombed in its Wednesday evening slot, in spite of heavy pre-promotion. The Italian press called it: "deadlier than methanol."

And the Friday night RAI-2 primetime variety, *Fate Il Vostro Gioco* (Place Your Bets) has been consistently under 2 million audience. Here again, the low budget allocated to the show may have a lot to do with the quality.

So although those who claimed that "variety is dead in Italy" (Enrico Vaime, one of the producers of *Fantastico,* even wrote a book with that title) seem to have been overstating the case, perhaps it would not be altogether wrong to describe the Italian television variety show as a sort of "Night Of The Living Dead." ■

CANADA: TV

Week ending November 20, 1988

Rank	Programme	Rating
CBC		
1	Hockey Night In Canada	2,286,000
2	Dallas	2,146,000
3	CBC National News	1,566,000
4	Newhart (8:00PM)	1,488,000
5	CBC Journal	1,393,000
CTV		
1	Cosby Show	3,527,000
2	War & Remembrance PT 4	2,688,000
3	Different World	2,626,000
4	War & Remembrance PT 2	2,550,000
5	War & Remembrance PT 5	2,508,000
Global		
1	Murder She Wrote	902,000
2	Beauty And The Beast	899,000
3	60 Minutes	851,000
4	Leaf Hockey: Pittsburgh	801,000
5	Who's The Boss	734,000
R-C		
1	Dames de Coeur	1,987,000
2	L'Heritage (Tue)	1,881,000
3	Samedi De Rire	1,717,000
4	Beaux Dimanches 1	1,604,000
5	Dallas (Tue)	1,210,000
TVA		
1	Entre Chien et Loup	2,033,000
2	Fais-Moi Un Dessin	2,003,000
3	Chop Suey	1,623,000
4	L'Or Du Temps	1,510,000
5	Dynastie	1,310,000

Source: Nielsen.

PHILIPPINES: TV (Foreign Shows)

Week ending November 20, 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	World Premiere Movies	13	19.8
2	The Real Ghostbusters	2	17.8
3	IBC TV 13 Presents	13	17.6
4	Macgyver	9	16.6
5	Miami Vice	7	15.7
6	Highwayman	2	14.9
7	Warrior	13	14.6
8	Guinness Records	2	13.4
9	Sledge Hammer	9	13.0
10	Scarecrow And Mrs King	7	12.7
11	Sunday Power	7	12.6
12	Tarzan	2	12.5
13	Nam	7	12.4
13	Wok With Yan	9	12.4
14	TV Censored Bloopers	9	12.3
15	Tuesday Special Specials	7	12.0
16	All Star Wrestling	13	11.4
16	Hitchhiker	9	11.4
17	Spect. Action On Screen	13	11.0
18	Sunday's Big Event	9	10.8
19	Name That Tune	9	10.2
19	Double Action Program	13	10.2
20	Alf	2	9.6

Source: AGB-Media Pulse.

NETHERLANDS: TV

November 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	Zeg 'ns Aaa	1	30.2
2	Op Goed Geluk	2	30.2
3	Mini Playbackshow	1	26.5
4	Sonja Op Donderdag	1	25.5
5	Onsa Ouwe	2	25.4
6	Surpise-Show	1	25.0
7	Football — Gronningen/Stuttgart	2	24.8
8	Wereldwijs	1	24.5
9	James Last/Bardien Stenberg	2	24.1
10	Opsporing Verzocht	2	23.6
11	Jongbload & Joosten	2	23.5
12	TV-show Op Reis	2	23.3
13	Achter Het Nieuws	1	22.4
14	Spartacus	2	22.4
15	Cosby Show	1	21.9
16	Showmasters	1	21.8
17	Last Maar Zitten	1	21.4
18	Konsumentenman	2	21.3
19	A Different World	1	19.5
20	Studio Sport	3	19.5

Source: AGB.

UNITED STATES: TV

Week ending December 23rd 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	The Cosby Show	NBC	25.9
2	Film — A Very Brady Christmas	CBS	25.1
3	A Different World	NBC	24.2
4	Cheers	NBC	23.7
5	Roseanne	ABC	22.9
6	Who's The Boss	ABC	21.3
7	The Golden Girls	NBC	20.1
8	L.A. Law	NBC	20.0
9	Murder, She Wrote	CBS	19.9
10	Dear John	NBC	19.3

Source: Nielson.

ITALY: TV

November 1988

Rank	Programme	Rating
1	Lunedi Film — Rambo II	26.94
2	Fantastico (variety)	21.52
3	UEFA — Bayern M/Inter	20.46
4	Football — Movantesimo Minute	19.77
5	Zecchino D'Oro — (children's music show)	17.16
6	TG1 News	17.09
7	Film — Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom	17.00
8	Film — Il Tenente dei Carabinieri	16.20
9	Film — Raiders Of The Lost Arc	14.84
10	TG2 News	14.62
11	TV Film — La Romana	14.54
12	Family Cinema — Robin Hood	14.41
13	Film — A Tranta Secondi Dalla Fine	14.41
14	Yuppies 2	14.07

Source: AGB.

UNITED KINGDOM: TV

Week ending December 11, 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating (millions)
1	EastEnders (serial)	BBC1	21.55
2	Bread (sitcom)	BBC1	20.95
3	EastEnders (serial)	BBC1	20.55
4	Neighbours (serial)	BBC1	18.85
5	Neighburs (serial)	BBC1	18.50
6	Neighbours (serial)	BBC1	18.35
7	Neighbours (serial)	BBC1	17.70
8	Coronation Street (serial)	ITV	17.00
9	Coronation Street (serial)	ITV	16.70
10	This Is Your Life (variety)	ITV	14.35
11	Blind Date (variety)	ITV	13.80
12	Supersense	BBC1	13.40
13	Fawlty Towers (sitcom)	BBC1	13.15
14	The Bill (drama series)	ITV	12.85
15	The Krypton Factor (game)	ITV	12.65
16	Beadle's About (variety)	ITV	12.65
17	Boon (drama)	ITV	12.50
18	Emmerdale Farm (serial)	ITV	11.35
19	Emmerdale Farm (serial)	ITV	11.35
20	Christabel (drama series)	BBC2	8.70

Source: BARB.

NEW ZEALAND: TV

Week ending December 17, 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating
1	Macgyver	TV2	30
2	North And South (6)	TV2	29
3	Tour Of Duty	TV2	27
4	Our World	TV1	25
5	The Return of Sherlock Holmes	TV2	24
6	It's In The Bag	TV2	24
7	Cheers	TV2	24
8	Sledge Hammer	TV2	23
9	The Good Life	TV2	20
10	Neighbours	TV2	18

This does not include Network News.
Source: AGB.

AUSTRALIA: TV

November 1988

Rank	Programme	Channel	Rating in 000s
1	The Comedy Company	10	2,042
2	A Country Practice	7	1,886
3	Neighbours	10	1,835
4	National Nine News	9	1,756
5	Hey, Hey, It's Saturday	9	1,555
6	A Current Affair	9	1,552
7	60 Minutes	9	1,550
8	Hey Dad	7	1,522
9	Home & Away	7	1,487
10	Sunday Evening Movies	9	1,451

Source: AGB.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

January 24-27	**Houston, US,** *NATPE.*
January 26	*Telefilm Canada Seminar,* **NATPE, Houston.**
February 10-21	*Berlin International Film & Video Festival,* **West Germany.**
February 13-17	*San Fransisco, USA, Video Expo,* **San Fransisco.**
February 13-18	**Monte Carlo, Monaco,** *International TV and Video Market. (Tel: 33-1-4562 31 00).*
February 28-March 2	**London,** *Vis-com UK.*
April 21-26	**Cannes, France,** *MIP-TV (Tel: 499 2317).*
April 29-May 2	**Washington, DC, USA,** *NAB (Tel: 202 429 53 50).*
May 7-13	**Switzerland,** *Golden Rose of Montreux.*
May 8-11	**Wembley, UK,** *Audio Visual 89 (Tel: 01-660 6243).*
May 8-11	**Ohrid, Yugoslavia,** *Yugoslavian Screenings '89 (JRT).*
May 11-23	**Cannes** *International Film Festival.*
May 15-17	**Hilversum, The Netherlands.** *International Television, Theatre and Film Lighting Colloquium (Tel: 31-35 775115. Fax: 31-35 774325).*
May 21-27	**Stockholm, Sweden.** *Input '89. International Public TV Screening.*
May 23-26	**Munich, Germany.** *Prix Jeunesse Seminar Conference subject: Target audience young people — in search of a phantom? (Tx: 521070. Fax 5900 3053).*
June 4-10	**Banff, Canada,** *Banff Television Festival, Alberta. (Tel: (403) 762-3060. Tx: 03-822 804. Fax: (403) 762 5357).*
June 17-22	**Montreux, Switzerland,** *XVI Simposium International de Television (Tel: 41 21 963 32 20).*
September 12-16	**Moscow, USSR,** *XXIIIrd International Teleforum — Intervision market for TV and video programmes.*
October 8-15	**Plovdiv, Bulgaria,** *17th Golden Chest International TV Festival. (Tx: 22558 Radio BG).*
October 25-28	**Frankfurt, Germany,** *Broadcast 89 (Tel: 069 7575 64 52).*
June 5-13 1990	**Munich, Germany.** *Prix Jeunesse International (Tx: 521070).*

While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, TV World cannot be held responsible for errors in this information.

In next month's TV World . . .

Benelux Special

— the latest developments in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg

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TV soccer strikes back

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down well; and it will certainly be a huge success with the Hispanic audience (for which TNT does not have rights). Seamus O'Brien of the distribution company CSI agrees with Sinrich, but thinks that the 1990 World Cup could herald the re-birth of soccer in the USA.

O'Brien's company sells soccer recordings all over the world. Each season, some 34 one-hour tapes from the Italian First Division matches (made by RAI), find markets in South-East Asia, Australia, and other parts of the Far East, and, with little difficulty, in Latin America. O'Brien says that packaging is all-important: distributors sell a variety of post-produced formats of soccer matches, some with international sound only, so that stations can add the voices of their own commentators.

To the large sums of money which television seems to be willing to pay for rights, must be added the cost of facilities and programming for the new channels. BSB in London recently signed an exclusive contract, worth £155 million (US$271 million) over five years, with Trans-World International. This contract will involve TWI in the production of at least ten hours of sports programming every day. Only a part of that, of course, will be soccer. TWI is known for its ability to produce "sportainment," and it will be interesting to see whether it will do for soccer what the Australian commercial networks have done for cricket.

It looks then, that after a few pauses for breath, the soccer associations and the broadcasters are poised for a great leap forward. In a multi-channel competitive industry, audiences for single games are unlikely to be as large as in the days of monopoly or duopoly of channels. So they will be going for the best matches they can get with the best coverage they can provide. It may well be worth the extra half-million or so to snatch a well-known commentator from a rival.

In Europe, as distinct from many other parts of the world, televised soccer has remained the property of the public service broadcasters. When new channels can command majority national audiences, soccer may well change hands — until that time comes, the soccer fan can continue to pick and choose. ■

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